

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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“Through the Desert, God leads us to Freedom”

2024 Lenten Message

BISHOP JOSEPH C. BAMBERA



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In his 2024 Lenten message to the Church, Pope Francis invites us to reflect upon the desert experience that is so prevalent in the life of Jesus and throughout the sacred scriptures. “Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more – in the words of the prophet Hosea – the place of our first love (cf. *Hos 2:16-17*). *God shapes his people, he enables us to leave our slavery behind* and experience a Passover from death to life.”

Essentially, the sacred season of Lent encourages us to step apart from the frenetic pace of life that has consumed us and to reflect – in the desert of our hearts – what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and to embrace his life and saving grace. In the midst of a world fraught with upheaval and pain as a result of wars, political and social polarization, and far too many “isms” and “phobias” that have proliferated throughout the globe, resulting in discrimination, hatred, pain and suffering, we need to step apart to assess our own role in contributing to the breakdown of peace and respect for the lives that God has placed within our own. “If our celebration of Lent is to be fruitful,” Pope Francis asserts, “the first step is to desire to open our eyes to reality.”

In the liturgy of Ash Wednesday every year, we listen to the words of the prophet Joel, who sets the stage not only for the season of Lent but for our response to the Lord’s call to discipleship. He does so by challenging us to change our lives – not merely by performing religious gestures and practices – but by peering intensely into our hearts to insure that our spirit is honest and pure and open to the transforming power and presence of God. Saint Matthew, in that same liturgy, reinforces the words of the prophet as he calls us to pray, fast, and to give alms in support of the poor – not because such behavior will make us righteous – but because such acts for the true follower of Jesus are simply the consequence of faithful lives rooted in Jesus, who teaches us how best to live.

Pope Francis puts these three pillars of our lives as followers of Jesus into perspective. “Today, the cry of so many of our oppressed brothers and sisters rises to heaven. Let us ask ourselves: Do we hear that cry? Does it trouble us? Does it move us? ... It is time to act ... Love of God and love of neighbor are one love ... For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting



Jesus is depicted carrying his cross in a mosaic of the second station of the Stations of the Cross at St. Thomas More Church on the campus of St. John’s University in Jamaica, N.Y. (OSV News photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us ... In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another. In place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travelers. This is God’s dream, the promised land to which we journey once we have left our slavery behind.”

By providing greater opportunities for prayer and reflection, Lent then becomes both a time for personal conversion and a favorable season for opening the doors to all those in need and recognizing in them the face of Christ as it challenges us to consider the gift and blessing of the Sacrament of Baptism in our lives.

Bishop Bambera’s Lenten Message Continues on Page 3



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with Our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

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Dear brothers and sisters!

When our God reveals himself, his message is always one of freedom: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex 20:2). These are the first words of the Decalogue given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Those who heard them were quite familiar with the exodus of which God spoke: the experience of their bondage still weighed heavily upon them. In the desert, they received the “Ten Words” as a thoroughfare to freedom. We call them “commandments,” in order to emphasize the strength of the love by which God shapes his people. The call to freedom is a demanding one. It is not answered straightaway; it has to mature as part of a journey. Just as Israel in the desert still clung to Egypt – often longing for the past and grumbling against the Lord and Moses – today too, God’s people can cling to an oppressive bondage that it is called to leave behind. We realize how true this is at those moments when we feel hopeless, wandering through life like a desert and lacking a promised land as our destination. Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more – in the words of the prophet Hosea – the place of our first love (cf. Hos 2:16-17). God shapes his people, he enables us to leave our slavery behind and experience a Passover from death to life. Like a bridegroom, the Lord draws us once more to himself, whispering words of love to our hearts.

The exodus from slavery to freedom is no abstract journey. If our celebration of Lent is to be concrete, the first step is to desire to open our eyes to reality. When the Lord calls out to Moses from the burning bush, he immediately shows that he is a God who sees and, above all, hears: “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex 3:7-8). Today too, the cry of so many of our oppressed brothers and sisters rises to heaven. Let us ask ourselves: Do we hear that cry? Does it trouble us? Does it move us? All too many things keep us apart from each other, denying the fraternity that, from the beginning, binds us to one another.

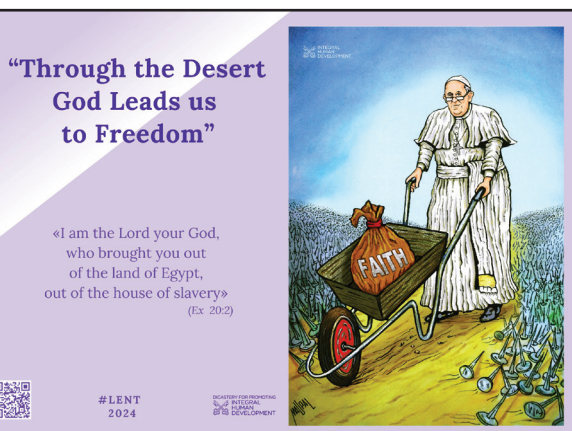
During my visit to Lampedusa, as a way of countering the globalization of indifference, I asked two questions, which have become more and more pressing: “Where are you?” (Gen 3:9) and “Where is your brother?” (Gen 4:9). Our Lenten journey will be concrete if, by listening once more to those two questions, we realize that even today we remain under the rule of Pharaoh. A rule that makes us weary and indifferent. A model of growth that divides and robs us of a future. Earth, air and water are polluted, but so are our souls. True, Baptism has begun our process of liberation, yet there remains in us an inexplicable longing for slavery. A kind of attraction to the security of familiar things, to the detriment of our freedom.

In the Exodus account, there is a significant detail: it is God who sees, is moved and brings freedom; Israel does not ask for this. Pharaoh stifles dreams, blocks the view of heaven, makes it appear that this world, in which human dignity is trampled upon and authentic bonds are denied, can never change. He put everything in bondage to himself. Let us ask: Do I want a new world? Am I ready to leave behind my compromises with the old? The witness of many of my brother bishops and a great number of those who work for peace and justice has increasingly convinced me that we need to combat a deficit of hope that stifles dreams and the silent cry that reaches to heaven and moves the heart of God. This “deficit of hope” is not unlike the nostalgia for slavery that paralyzed Israel in the desert and prevented it from moving forward. An exodus can be interrupted: how else can we explain the fact that humanity has arrived at the threshold of universal fraternity and at levels of scientific, technical, cultural, and juridical development capable of guaranteeing dignity to all, yet gropes about in the darkness of inequality and conflict.

God has not grown weary of us. Let us welcome Lent as the great season in which he reminds us: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex 20:2). Lent is a season of conversion, a time of freedom. Jesus himself, as we recall each year on the first Sunday of Lent, was driven into the desert by the Spirit in order to be tempted in freedom. For forty days, he will stand before us and with us: the incarnate Son. Unlike Pharaoh, God does not want subjects, but sons and daughters. The desert is the place where our freedom can mature in a personal decision not to fall back into slavery. In Lent, we find new criteria of justice and a community with which we can press forward on a road not yet taken.

This, however, entails a struggle, as the book of Exodus and the temptations of Jesus in the desert make clear to us. The voice of God, who says, “You are my Son, the Beloved” (Mk 1:11), and “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex 20:3) is opposed by the enemy and his lies. Even more to be feared than Pharaoh are the idols that we set up for ourselves; we can consider them as his voice speaking within us. To be all-powerful, to be looked up to by all, to domineer over others: every human being is aware of how deeply seductive that lie can be. It is a road well-travelled. We can become attached to money, to certain projects, ideas or goals, to our position, to a tradition, even to certain individuals. Instead of making us move forward, they paralyze us. Instead of encounter, they create conflict. Yet there is also a new humanity, a people of the little ones and of the humble who have not yielded to the allure of the lie. Whereas those who serve idols become like them, mute, blind, deaf and immobile (cf. Ps 114:4), the poor of spirit are open and ready: a silent force of good that heals and sustains the world.

It is time to act, and in Lent, to act also means to pause. To pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Love of God and love of neighbour are one love. Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbour. For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Then the atrophied and isolated heart will revive. Slow down, then, and pause!



Pope Francis' 2024 Lenten Message Continues on Page 4

“A través del Desierto, Dios nos conduce a la Libertad”

Mensaje de Cuaresma 2024 del Obispo Bambera

Queridos hermanos y hermanas en Cristo,

En su mensaje de Cuaresma de 2024 a la Iglesia, el Papa Francisco nos invita a reflexionar sobre la experiencia del desierto que prevalece tanto en la vida de Jesús como en las Sagradas Escrituras. «La Cuaresma es el tiempo de gracia en el que el desierto puede volver a ser –en palabras del profeta Oseas– el lugar de nuestro primer amor (cf. Os 2,16-17). Dios forma a su pueblo, nos permite dejar atrás nuestra esclavitud y vivir una Pascua de muerte a vida”.

Esencialmente, el tiempo sagrado de la Cuaresma nos anima a alejarnos del ritmo frenético de vida que nos ha consumido y a reflexionar – en el desierto de nuestro corazón – lo que significa ser discípulo de Jesús y abrazar su vida y su gracia salvadora. . En medio de un mundo plagado de agitación y dolor como resultado de guerras, polarización política y social, y demasiados “ismos” que han proliferado en todo el mundo, dando como resultado discriminación, odio, dolor y sufrimiento, debemos dar un paso adelante. aparte para evaluar nuestro propio papel al contribuir a la ruptura de la paz y el respeto por las vidas que Dios ha puesto dentro de nosotros. “Para que nuestra celebración de la Cuaresma sea fructífera”, afirma el Papa Francisco, “el primer paso es desear abrir los ojos a la realidad”.

Cada año, en la liturgia del Miércoles de Ceniza, escuchamos las palabras del profeta Joel, quien prepara el escenario no sólo para el tiempo de Cuaresma sino también para nuestra respuesta al llamado del Señor al discipulado. Y lo hace desafiándonos a cambiar nuestras vidas – no simplemente realizando gestos y prácticas religiosas – sino mirando intensamente dentro de nuestros corazones para asegurar que nuestro espíritu sea honesto y puro y esté abierto al poder transformador y la presencia de Dios. San Mateo, en esa misma liturgia, refuerza las palabras del profeta cuando nos llama a orar, ayunar y dar limosna en apoyo de los pobres, no porque tal comportamiento nos haga justos, sino porque tales actos son para el verdadero seguidor. de Jesús son simplemente la consecuencia de vidas fieles arraigadas en Jesús, quien nos enseña cómo vivir mejor.

El Papa Francisco pone en perspectiva estos tres pilares de nuestras vidas como seguidores de Jesús. “Hoy, el grito de tantos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas oprimidos sube al cielo. Preguntémosnos: ¿Escuchamos ese grito? ¿Nos preocupa? ¿Nos conmueve? ... Es tiempo de actuar. ... El amor a Dios y el amor al prójimo son un solo amor. ... Por eso, la oración, la limosna y el ayuno no son tres actos inconexos, sino un único movimiento de apertura y de vaciamiento, en el que echamos fuera los ídolos que nos pesan, los apegos que nos aprisionan. ... En presencia de Dios, nos volvemos hermanos y hermanas, más sensibles unos a otros. En lugar de amenazas y enemigos, descubrimos compañeros y compañeros de viaje. Este es el sueño de Dios, la tierra prometida a la que viajamos una vez que hayamos dejado atrás nuestra esclavitud”.

Al brindar mayores oportunidades para la oración y la reflexión, la Cuaresma se convierte entonces en un tiempo para la conversión personal y en un tiempo favorable para abrir las puertas a todos los necesitados y reconocer en ellos el rostro de Cristo, que nos desafía a considerar el don y la bendición de el Sacramento del Bautismo en nuestras vidas.

El primer domingo de Cuaresma daremos la bienvenida a los catecúmenos a las filas de los elegidos; aquellos de entre nosotros que han comenzado el camino de la conversión y que pronto experimentarán el poder salvador de Jesús en los misterios pascales del Bautismo, la Confirmación y la Eucaristía. Su “sí” al llamado del Señor nos da esperanza y debería animarnos a volver a comprometernos con los votos que hicimos en nuestros propios bautismos. Su “sí” nos recuerda que nosotros también estamos llamados a mirar más allá de nosotros mismos hacia algo más en la vida.

Mientras continuamos dando gracias por el regalo singular de la presencia de Dios en la Sagrada Eucaristía durante el tercer año de Avivamiento Eucarístico en nuestra tierra, una vez más celebrará una Hora Santa ante el Santísimo Sacramento en cada uno de nuestros doce decanatos durante las semanas de Prestado. Espero orar con muchos de ustedes mientras buscamos la gracia sanadora de Dios.

Finalmente, los animo a todos a aprovechar la misericordia y la curación del Señor en el Sacramento de la Reconciliación.

Amigos míos, en el desierto de nuestros corazones, la Cuaresma nos llama a reflexionar sobre nuestra relación con Dios y a reconocer que Dios es siempre fiel y presente, particularmente en medio de los desafíos que envuelven nuestro mundo quebrantado y nuestras vidas frágiles. Que seamos lo suficientemente humildes para abrir nuestras vidas a la presencia misericordiosa de Dios y caminar con él en el viaje vivificante de conversión y renovación.

Conozca mis oraciones por una observancia fructífera de la Cuaresma.

Fielmente tuyo en Cristo,

Reverendísimo Joseph C. Bambera, DD, JCL
Obispo de Scranton

Reflect upon your relationship with God, Bishop Bambera says in Lenten message

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On the First Sunday of Lent, we will welcome catechumens into the ranks of the elect; those from our midst who have begun the journey of conversion and who will soon experience the saving power of Jesus in the Easter mysteries of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. Their “yes” to the Lord’s call gives us hope and should encourage us to recommit ourselves to the vows that were made at our own baptisms. Their “yes” reminds us that we too are called to look beyond ourselves to something more in life.

As we continue to give thanks for the singular gift of God’s presence in the Holy Eucharist during the third year of Eucharistic Revival in our land, I will once again celebrate a Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament in each of our twelve deaneries throughout the weeks of Lent. I look forward to praying with many of you as we seek God’s healing grace.

Finally, I encourage all of us to avail ourselves of the Lord’s mercy and healing in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

My friends, in the desert of our hearts, Lent calls us to reflect upon our relationship with God and to recognize that God is ever faithful and present, particularly amid the challenges that envelop our broken world and fragile lives. May we be humble enough to open our lives to God’s merciful presence and walk with him on the life-giving journey of conversion and renewal.

Please know of my prayers for a fruitful observance of Lent.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Joseph C. Bambera

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.
Bishop of Scranton



**RETURN TO ME WITH
YOUR WHOLE HEART**

Regulations for Lent 2024

Lent is a 40 day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. It is a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter.

The following fasting and abstinence regulations are observed:

- **FASTING** is to be observed on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14, 2024) and Good Friday (March 29, 2024) by all Catholics over 18 years of age to the beginning of their 60th year. On days of fasting, one full meal is allowed. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one's needs, but together should not equal another full meal, unless dispensed or excused.

- **ABSTINENCE** from meat is to be observed by all Catholics who are 14 years of age or older. Ash Wednesday, all of the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday are days of abstinence.

During Lent, we seek the Lord in prayer by reading Sacred Scripture; we serve by giving alms; and we practice self-control through fasting. We are called not only to abstain from luxuries during Lent, but to a true inner conversion of heart as we seek to follow Christ's will more faithfully. We recall the waters of baptism in which we were also baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.

Lent is a penitential season. It is a time to seek forgiveness, to look inward, and to admit our shortcomings and failures. All faithful of the Diocese of Scranton are reminded of Diocesan Statute No. 41, which addresses the penitential aspect of Lent:

"The season of Lent is penitential in nature and during Lent penance should be not only internal and individual, but also external and social (Sacrosanctum Concilium, No. 5, 109). Pastors are obliged to avoid scheduling activities in the parishes which in any way could possibly detract from the external and social penance required by Lent."

How can you spend your time during Lent?

- By **"giving up"** things you hunger after, such as sweets or alcohol; or activities you desire, such as vacations, concerts or movies.
- By **"doing"** things to help others, such as offering an extra donation to the poor or helping those in need by providing food or clothing.
- By **"adding"** to our normal routine, such as going to daily Mass, praying the Stations of the Cross and going to confession.

Almsgiving is a way of sharing
in God's work to sustain and
support all his children.



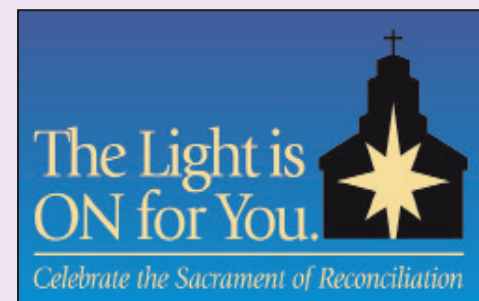
The Light is ON for You!

The Church encourages us to make confession a regular part of our spiritual life, especially during the holy season of Lent, as we reflect on our baptism and repentance.

Parishes in the Diocese of Scranton will once again participate in **"The Light is ON for You"** initiative in 2024.

Every Monday evening during the Lenten season, beginning Feb. 19, and continuing through the Monday of the last full week of Lent, March 18, confessions will be heard in every parish from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. (unless the parish already has a different established weeknight tradition).

This special opportunity allows Catholics the ability to come (or return to) this incredible source of God's grace, mercy and healing.



Christians must rekindle hope in fighting today's forms of slavery, Pope Francis says in Lenten message

Continued from Page 2

The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energies. In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travelers. This is God's dream, the promised land to which we journey once we have left our slavery behind.

The Church's synodal form, which in these years we are rediscovering and cultivating, suggests that Lent is also a time of communitarian decisions, of decisions, small and large, that are countercurrent. Decisions capable of altering the daily lives of individuals and entire neighborhoods, such as the ways we acquire goods, care for creation, and strive to include those who go unseen or are looked down upon. I invite every Christian community to do just this: to offer its members moments set aside to rethink their lifestyles, times to examine their presence in society and the contribution they make to its betterment. Woe to us if our Christian penance were to resemble the kind of penance that so dismayed Jesus. To us too, he says: "Whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting" (Mt 6:16). Instead, let others see joyful faces, catch the scent of freedom and experience the love that makes all things new, beginning with the smallest and those nearest to us. This can happen in every one of our Christian communities.

To the extent that this Lent becomes a time of conversion, an anxious humanity will notice a burst of creativity, a flash of new hope. Allow me to repeat what I told the young people whom I met in Lisbon last summer: "Keep seeking and be ready to take risks. At this moment in time, we face enormous risks; we hear the painful plea of so many people. Indeed, we are experiencing a third world war fought piecemeal. Yet let us find the courage to see our world, not as being in its death throes but in a process of giving birth, not at the end but at the beginning of a great new chapter of history. We need courage to think like this" (Address to University Students, 3 August 2023). Such is the courage of conversion, born of coming up from slavery. For faith and charity take hope, this small child, by the hand. They teach her to walk. and at the same time. she leads them forward.1

I bless all of you and your Lenten journey.

Franciscus

Lenten Holy Hours begin this week in Luzerne County

SCRANTON - For the second consecutive year, all of the faithful in the Diocese of Scranton are invited to a Lenten Holy Hour with the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, to commemorate the Year of Parish Revival for the National Eucharistic Revival. These gatherings will take place in each of the twelve deaneries of the Diocese of Scranton.

The dates and locations are listed below. Each Holy Hour will begin at 7 p.m.

During the Year of Parish Revival, which lasts through June 2024, every parish in the country is being invited to offer opportunities to parishioners where they can be healed, converted, formed, and unified by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist – and then be sent out on mission “for the life of the world.”



2024 Lenten Holy Hours

Thursday, Feb. 15
Holy Family Parish, Luzerne

Tuesday, Feb. 20
Our Lady of Victory Parish, Tannersville

Wednesday, Feb. 21
Most Precious Blood Parish, Hazleton

Thursday, Feb. 22
Christ the King Parish, Archbald

Tuesday, Feb. 27
Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Twp.

Wednesday, Feb. 28
Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, Williamsport

Thursday, Feb. 29
Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish,
Tunkhannock

Tuesday, March 5
Saint Joseph Mareello Parish, Pittston

Wednesday, March 6
Saint John Neumann Parish, Lords Valley

Thursday, March 7
Epiphany Parish, Sayre

Monday, March 18
Our Lady of Hope Parish, Wilkes-Barre

Wednesday, March 20
Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish, Scranton

“FOOD FOR THOUGHT, FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY”



*-A Priesthood Perspective by Father Pat Albert -
Pastor, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Tunkhannock*

By now, I am sure that you have heard of the "National Eucharistic Revival" as it is a movement to revitalize the meaning of the Real Presence of our Lord in the very essence of the Eucharist, a reminder of the main-tenants of our faith.

This movement promises to raise our consciousness to a greater understanding of the tremendous value of our Sunday and daily celebrations and how those celebrations can impact our lives. I have, from a very early age, understood that the Eucharist is a mystical experience. What I mean by 'mystical' is the fact that we receive the Body of Christ in a setting that is reverent, yet simple. The culmination of a ritual that is rooted in ancient traditions. The other experience of the Eucharist is found in the exposition and benediction of the very same holy bread, conducted in a manner equally rooted in long-standing tradition.

Having given this modest introduction to the Holy Eucharist held so dearly by the Universal Church, we move on to the main theme of my recent experience as yet another approach equally valid of the power of this gift.

I attended a Eucharistic celebration last year and it was my hope that it would be well attended as many celebrations have experienced diminishing numbers as part of our post-Covid world. Much to my surprise and delight, this service was not only well-attended, but was in fact a capacity crowd. I felt a deep sense of gratitude knowing that these people came to this service not out of habit, but out of a genuine sense of devotion to our Lord to come away from the noise and chaos of our world to a place of quiet, of peace, a place where deep reflection can occur and promote growth within us.

What I have described so far in this article is a surface observation, people gathering together to give due worship to God. We could, at this juncture, end our reflection on the Real Presence; we could perhaps tack on a quote from centuries past and call it a day. This would satisfy one-half of the story, but there is so much more we can say about the experience of the real presence. Permit me to explore a different dimension of the experience of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Lets face it, people bring their worries, their needs, anxieties and fears. Looking at the many and varied people, men, women and young people, I had to wonder what are their needs and their challenges and why they are here. It may be for help or for strength in their life's decisions. At some point during the service, I found myself not so much praying for my own well-being as praying for all of the good people in that holy room asking our Lord to give solace and strength to all of the good people of this congregation; for an increase of "food for the journey," as it were.

Isn't it interesting that although I came to this vesper service expecting a one-on-one with Jesus and came away with a very different perspective on faith and on the power of the Eucharistic celebration - *Food for Thought, Food for Spiritual Strength* - and the nourishment that only God can give.



Catholic Television to broadcast Cathedral devotions during Lent

WORSHIP
PRAY

LENT

REPENT
GIVE
GATHER

EVENING PRAYER
with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

SUNDAYS DURING LENT

February 18	March 10
February 25	March 17
March 3	March 24

Cathedral of Saint Peter | 6:15 p.m.

EVENING PRAYER WILL BE BROADCAST EACH SUNDAY
LIVE ON CATHOLIC TELEVISION

SCRANTON - During Lent, the Cathedral of Saint Peter offers several ways in which the faithful can deepen their relationship with Jesus and come to know Him in a more intimate way.

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will make many of these opportunities available to the faithful through television broadcasts and livestream opportunities.

Every Sunday during Lent, the Cathedral will be hosting Adoration and Evening Prayer following the 5 p.m. Mass.

Evening Prayer is part of the Liturgy

of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office. In the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church fulfills Jesus' command to "pray always." Through this prayer, the people of God sanctify the day by continual praise of God and prayers of intercession for the needs of the world.

During Lent, CTV plans to broadcast both the Sunday 5 p.m. Mass live as well as the Sunday Evening Prayer that will begin directly thereafter (around 6:15 p.m.).

The first broadcast of the Sunday 5 p.m. Mass and Evening Prayer will take place on Sunday, Feb. 18, 2024.

Stations of the Cross



Every Friday during Lent, the Stations of the Cross are prayed following the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral. Catholic Television will broadcast the Stations of the Cross each week live with rebroadcasts following the rebroadcast of the Daily Mass at 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Accompany our Lord to Calvary and meditate on His suffering.

Rite of Election



The Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion is when candidates and catechumens participating in OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) publicly declare their intention to fully enter the Church.

CTV: Catholic Television will broadcast the celebration live on the First Sunday of Lent, Feb. 18, at 2:30 p.m.

'Road to Resurrection' series to be held in Lackawanna & Lycoming Counties

The parishes of the Scranton and Williamsport Deaneries are inviting the faithful to participate in 'Road to Resurrection' events this Lent.

In Scranton, the faithful will be able to immerse themselves in scripture from the Gospels as they are guided through the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection.

In the Lycoming County area, the weekly prayer opportunities will feature Eucharistic Adoration, Benediction and Vespers.

Road to Resurrection
Scranton Deanery 2024

Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 22 - Saint Paul Parish
1510 Penn Avenue, Scranton

Feb. 29 - Immaculate Conception
800 Taylor Avenue, Scranton

March 7 - Mary Mother of God Parish
316 William Street, Scranton

March 14 - Prince of Peace Parish
123 W. Grace Street, Old Forge

March 21 - Divine Mercy Parish
312 Davis Street, Scranton

ROAD TO RESURRECTION
LYCOMING COUNTY CATHOLIC CHURCHES

Feb. 21 - Immaculate Conception, Bastress
Feb. 28 - Saint Joseph the Worker, Williamsport
March 6 - Church of the Resurrection, Muncy
March 13 - Saint Lawrence Church, South Williamsport
March 20 - Saint Ann Church, Williamsport
March 27 - Saint Boniface Church, Williamsport

Each Weekly Opportunity begins at 7 p.m.

Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine, marking two years since invasion, to be held Feb. 25 in Scranton

Prayer Service for Peace and to Commemorate the Second Year of War in Ukraine

**Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024
2:30 p.m.
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton**

SCRANTON – It has been nearly two years since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began – and all people of goodwill are invited to join together to pray for an end to the war later this month.

On Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024, a ‘Prayer Service for Peace and to Commemorate the Second Year of War in Ukraine’ will be held at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton at 2:30 p.m.

The Prayer Service will be led by Father Myron Myronyuk, Pastor, Saint Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Church of Scranton, and the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

“We want to remind people that our brothers and sisters are still suffering tremendously in Ukraine,” Father Myron said. “I know that many people are tired of war, but it is still going on. We are still losing a lot of lives and that is why we will have this opportunity to think about it, pray for our soldiers, and offer continued support for them.”

While in-person attendance is highly encouraged, the Prayer Service will also be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel, and social media platforms.

“Father John Seniv will be the homilist. His mother was born in Ukraine. He was a long-time pastor in Berwick and was transferred to Northampton and retired from that parish a few years ago,” Father Myron stated. “We also have an opera singer from Philadelphia who is willing to come and perform a few songs during the Prayer Service.”

Since the invasion began, Father Myron has coordinated several shipments of supplies to Ukraine. That has included everything from tourniquets to hospital beds and medication. Those attending the Prayer Service will be able to provide monetary support to the ongoing efforts.

“The greater Scranton community has given us such support. We’ve been able to buy vehicles, two ambulances, 15 drones, a lot of medical equipment, uniforms that we have shipped to Ukraine,” he said.

For the last two years, Pope Francis has relentlessly called for peace. Recently, the Holy Father said today’s wars and conflicts have put humanity on the brink of the abyss and called for a worldwide cease-fire.

“I will never tire of reiterating my call, addressed in particular to those who have political responsibility: stop the bombs and missiles now, end hostile stances” everywhere, the pope said in an interview with La Stampa, an Italian newspaper, published Jan. 29, 2024.

“A global cease-fire is urgent: either we do not realize it, or we are pretending not to see that we are on the brink of the abyss,” he said.

Since the Prayer Service will be held during Lent, Father Myron is hoping the pews will be full.

“Our people in Ukraine are asking us to pray for them. I want to thank all the good people, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, who are praying for Ukraine constantly. I want to thank them for that kindness,” he said. “During Lent, we try to work on our soul – but of course – we are constantly thinking about others.”

Diocesan schools, parishes rally to support wounded Scranton police officer

SCRANTON — The Diocese of Scranton has an uncanny way of looking out for its own. That magnanimous spirit of care and concern has arguably never been more evident and on display than during the past month, when Diocesan parishes and Catholic schools answered the call to duty in coming to the aid of a native son.

In the early morning hours of Jan. 11, Scranton police Detective Kyle Gilmartin was critically wounded by gunfire in an ambush-style attack carried out by a young assailant while Scranton law enforcement was summoned to the city’s west side.

Detective Gilmartin, 34, a native of the Pittston area and nine-year veteran of the Scranton police department, suffered life-threatening injuries and was rushed to a city hospital, where he began his recovery that many have termed “miraculous.”

The fact that Gilmartin was faithfully carrying out his duties came as no surprise to his former mathematics teacher at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre, Maureen Janoski, who referred to the wounded officer as a “good and nice student,” always dutifully completing his course work.

“I remember him being a very kind individual,” Marcus Grudzinski, a classmate of Detective Gilmartin at Holy Redeemer where he currently teaches social studies, said of the Scranton police officer, who also attended the former Saint Mary of the Assumption Elementary School and Seton Catholic High School, both in Pittston. “He was always someone who would help if someone needed help with anything.”

The Wilkes-Barre Catholic high school quickly responded in kind by collecting donations for their alumnus from the Royal family and conducting a “dress down” day, whereby students offered \$3 to attend classes in casual attire.



Students at Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston proudly display a ceremonial check representing the \$2,105 the school raised in support of Scranton police Detective Kyle Gilmartin and his family.



Saint Clare/Saint Paul School students, from left, Mia Davis, Eloise Kerrigan, Anthony Donato, Jordan Vescovi, Christopher Butler and Emma Butler are shown with one of the “SPD STRONG” signs the Scranton school is selling to help wounded city Detective Kyle Gilmartin.

“The outpouring of generosity was tremendous,” Holy Redeemer Principal Cody Opalka related. “Normally, a dress down day might bring in a few hundred dollars. This collection brought in \$3,500.”

“It just goes to show how much love and respect our school community has for those who wear a badge, but also to a family that suffered such a traumatic event,” Opalka added, noting that during the week of Jan. 15 the entire school donned blue as a sign of solidarity for Detective Gilmartin.

In Lackawanna County, Saint Clare/Saint Paul School sprang into action as students, faculty, administrators and families conducted a sale of “SPD STRONG” signs for public display, which thus far has raised nearly \$650.

Kara Ware, principal of the two Catholic elementary schools in Scranton’s Green Ridge section, said, “Our commitment to supporting Detective Gilmartin and the Scranton Police Department with a demonstrative symbol like selling the yard signs made perfect sense as a means for both raising funds, and showing how much our school and neighborhood community cares about our local law enforcement.

“Over the years, the Scranton Police has demonstrated their commitment to a partnership with Saint Clare and Saint Paul schools. Those signs are a daily reminder of the commitment, sacrifice put forth each day by the men and women on the force.”

Rebecca Yeager, eighth grade student and Student Council president at Saint Paul’s, said that highlighting the police department in this time of need “shows our support for a man whose job it is to protect us.”

Continued on page 32

Deacon installed as Parish Life Coordinator for two Hazleton parishes

HAZLETON – A native son of Holy Rosary Parish, who has served that community since his ordination to the permanent diaconate in 2015, is now taking on additional responsibilities.

Deacon Vincent Oberto has been appointed by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, to serve as Parish Life Coordinator (PLC) of both Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, and its linked parish of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton.

“I am humbly grateful,” Deacon Oberto said after his formal installation by Bishop Bambera on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024.

The installation of Deacon Oberto took place during the 4 p.m. Mass at Holy Name of Jesus Parish and immediately repeated at the 5:15 p.m. Mass at Holy Rosary Parish.

“It really is a touching tribute to all of you, that from amongst you, came a man who chose to receive and listen to the call of the Church to serve as a deacon and now in this unique role to lead this parish community,” Bishop Bambera said at the conclusion of the Holy Rosary Parish Mass.

The Code of Canon Law recognizes that there exist parish situations in which the ministry of a permanent pastor may not be possible. Canon 517 states that, because of a lack of priests, a Diocesan bishop may entrust the pastoral care of a parish to a deacon or some other person who is not a priest. Recognizing that the administration of the Sacraments requires the ministry of an ordained priest, a Priest Moderator is assigned to work in cooperation with the Parish Life Coordinator.

During his homily, Bishop Bambera noted that while the Diocese of Scranton currently has roughly 90 active Diocesan priests, by 2030, it is expecting to have only about 60 priests. The Diocese of Scranton’s *Vision 2030 Pastoral*



VISION 2030

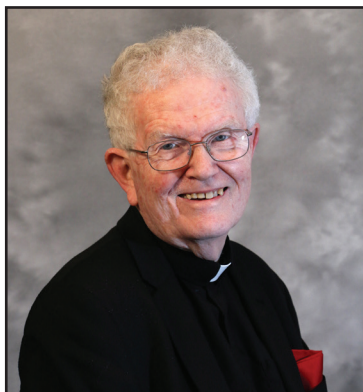
*Creating Parish Communities
Rooted in the Life of Jesus Christ*



New Pastoral Ministry Team for Holy Rosary Parish and Holy Name of Jesus Parish



Deacon Vincent M. Oberto
Parish Life Coordinator



Rev. Connell A. McHugh
Sacramental Minister



Rev. Michael J. Piccola, V.F.
Priest Moderator



Rev. Sergio Leon Pamplona Henao
Parochial Vicar (Asst. Pastor)

Planning Process is proactively working to ensure the pastoral needs of parish communities can be met.

“That is a big challenge for us to keep our parishes alive and vibrant. I want to thank you for your willingness to embrace this model that we’re beginning tonight with the Parish Life Coordinator in the person of Deacon Vince,” Bishop Bambera said.

The Bishop stressed the Parish Life Coordinator model of parish leadership is not a novelty for the Diocese of Scranton. Over the last decade, several parishes have utilized the model and been very successful.

“We are leading the way for the future in the Hazleton area,” Deacon Oberto told *The Catholic Light* in an interview about his new role.

“In the last two years, there have been six different priests, including Monsignor (Arthur) Kaschenbach who passed away, that the people have gone through in the two parishes, so we have to bring a calm to the storm,” Deacon Oberto said. “Everything will be

“We are leading the way for the future in the Hazleton area ... When the people start to see how it operates and how we function, it will be okay”

-Deacon Vincent Oberto

okay. It is a great opportunity ... When the people start seeing how it operates and how we function, it will be okay.”

During his formal installation, Deacon Oberto promised to serve the people of both parishes to the best of his ability, serve the needs of both parish communities, and work with the people to share the faith and Good News of the Gospel.

As Parish Life Coordinator, Deacon Oberto will oversee the administrative and pastoral needs of both parishes. He will facilitate lifelong faith formation in collaboration with parish catechetical leaders, assist in planning and coordinating weekly liturgies in collaboration with an

appointed Sacramental minister, oversee visitation of parishioners who are sick, and supervise parish staff, among many other responsibilities.

“The people have seen me in many of these roles already,” Deacon Oberto said.

The new ministry team for Holy Rosary and Holy Name of Jesus Parishes will include Father Connell A. McHugh, who will serve as Sacramental Minister, Father Michael J. Piccola, who will serve as Priest Moderator, and Father Sergio Leon Pamplona Henao, who will serve as Assistant Pastor.

As Sacramental Minister, Father McHugh will assist the parish communities by celebrating

Mass, sacraments and providing other needed priestly ministry in collaboration with the Parish Life Coordinator.

As Priest Moderator, Father Piccola, who will continue to serve as Pastor of SS. Cyril & Methodius Parish, Hazleton, will supervise the pastoral care that is provided to both parishes in accordance with Canon Law.

As Assistant Pastor, Father Sergio will serve the Spanish-speaking community at Holy Name of Jesus Parish but also provide assistance in celebrating Masses in both communities.

Holy Rosary and Holy Name of Jesus Parishes were most recently served by Father J. Duane Gavitt, who retired because of health reasons on Jan. 27, 2024.

“There is more to a church than just a building, a priest, or a bishop. The church is the people of God,” Bishop Bambera said during his homily. “You know what gives me hope tonight. There is a filled church with people celebrating their faith, smiling, giving thanks and ready to continue to go forward.”

Rectory, Set, Cook! III is now underway

Vote for your favorite recipe or pastor chef before March 26

SCRANTON – For the third year in a row, priests from across the Diocese of Scranton have taken to the kitchen, recording themselves cooking a favorite recipe, to raise money for anti-hunger, anti-homelessness initiatives of Catholic Social Services.

Rectory, Set, Cook! III began on Feb. 13 and will run for six weeks, wrapping up on March 26.

“I’m on the phone at least once a week with Catholic Social Services for something – somebody needing heating oil, somebody needing food,” Father Mike Kloton, Pastor, Good Shepherd Parish, Drums, and Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish, Freeland, said. “The employee who works the phones there recognizes my number!”

A total of 37 priests have participated in this year’s fundraiser – making a total of 30 videos. Some of the priests are being assisted by Catholic school students and other young people because the theme of this year’s effort is “Collars and Scholars.”

“By doing this, parishioners get a whole different view of us,” Father Kloton added. “They just want to see us as regular guys.”

For the last two years, Father James Paisley, who admits he has no culinary talent, has finished on top of the friendly culinary competition.

“It is a fun way to do something that a lot of priests have a little difficulty doing, which is asking for money,” Father Paisley said. “This is a fun way for us to put a good cause out there and have a lot of fun doing it.”

This year, Father Paisley says he decided on the perfect recipe after traveling all over the world to find ingredients for an “International Pizza.”

“It doesn’t matter if you have culinary skills. People see the fun that we’re having doing it and they’re thrilled to be able to support it,” he added.

Here is how the fundraiser works.

People who view the videos are asked to “support” their favorite recipe or priest by making a monetary donation of at least \$10 per vote. People are welcome to donate

as much money as they would like and are able to support as many priests as they desire.

“I try to come up with a recipe that hopefully everybody will like,” Father Jerry Gurka, Pastor, Saint John the Baptist Parish, Larksville, and All Saints Parish, Plymouth, explained. “As church and priests, we feed people spiritually and now we can feed people

physically, helping people to be fed as well.”

This year, Father Gurka focused his culinary efforts around a key lime dessert.

“Key lime was my mom’s favorite recipe,” he said. “We are so happy to do this for people.”

Several philanthropic sponsors help to make *Rectory, Set, Cook!* possible, including our presenting sponsor, Hawk

Family Foundation, and our Sous Chef Sponsors, M&T Bank and Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services and Discover NEPA.

To view all of the videos and vote for your favorite, scan the QR code in the graphic on this page or click on *Rectory, Set, Cook!* on the Diocese of Scranton website at dioceseofscranton.org.

NOW PLAYING!

**YOUR FAVORITE PASTOR CHEFS HAVE TAKEN TO THEIR KITCHENS A THIRD TIME
- MAKING UP OUR LARGEST COLLAR-NARY CREW TO DATE!**

37 collared cooks on 30 teams

In an epic food fight vs. hunger and homelessness!

Which priests will rise to the top?

RECTORY, SET, COOK! 2024

COLLARS + SCHOLARS

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For sponsorship or other information, call Sandra Snyder at 570-591-5004 or email Sandra-Snyder@dioceseofscranton.org.

Catholic women find renewed faith at *Bold and Beloved Retreat*

Diocesan Annual Appeal funding helps make parish life initiatives possible

DALTON – A total of 62 women took a step back from the busyness of their lives recently to participate in the ‘Bold and Beloved Women’s Retreat’ sponsored by the Diocesan Office for Parish Life.

The Jan. 26-28 weekend event held at Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center gave each woman the opportunity to reflect, recharge, and find rest in our Lord.

“It was everything I expected and more,” Anne Jenkins, parishioner of Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary Parish in Wilkes-Barre, said. “The ladies have been just so welcoming. I’m making all the connections I had hoped to make.”

The weekend featured four different talks and time for personal reflection, along with two Masses, Eucharistic Adoration, and the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

“There is something beautiful about women coming together. Our culture today seems to almost discourage it,” Grace Zelinka, parishioner of Saint Jude in Mountain Top, said. “While we’re all different ages and at different places in life, we all have our faith in common and have a lot of the same values.”

The age range of participants spanned from early 20s to a 92-year-old woman.



Catholic women from all parts of the Diocese of Scranton came together Jan. 26-28 for the ‘Bold and Beloved Retreat’ at Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center in Dalton. (Photo/Dan Piazza)

“It has been so edifying to see so many women having an experience of their faith with other women in our diocese,” Mary Hallman, Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life, explained.

Theresa Plishka of Forty Fort attended the retreat with her mother after deciding to give her the experience as a Christmas present.

“We have a big family and she has a lot of grandkids running around so I thought it would be nice for both of us to

take some time away from the world, the headaches of all the things we have to do,” Plishka said. “I thought what a great way for both of us to grow in our relationship with each other and our relationship with God.”

Retreat organizers say they found many mother-daughter duos who signed up for the experience together.

“It has just been really moving to see how those relationships are being blessed by the Lord today,”

Marianne Guarnieri, Diocesan Director for Discipleship, added.

The retreat was led by Kara Kardell and Fred Shellabarger, founders of Draw Near, a movement that draws people close to Christ and one another through prayer, music, and communal spiritual exercises. Many of the reflections and discussions revolved around the teachings of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux.

“Saint Therese is a personal favorite saint of mine and having a weekend

dedicated to her teachings, I felt would definitely help me grow closer in my faith,” Hannah Halliday, parishioner of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville, said. “I definitely feel that I’ve grown stronger in my faith just in the last couple of days that I’ve been here. I’ve learned so much that I’m going to take home and will encourage my fiancé to join me in strengthening our faith.”

“It was amazing to hear Kara’s testimony and her connections with God and her authenticity,” Kathleen Swann Fisher, parishioner of Saint John the Apostle Church in East Stroudsburg, added.

Funding from the Diocesan Annual Appeal helped to make the 2024 Bold & Beloved Retreat a reality. Generous gifts to the Appeal each year help to fund Parish Life initiatives throughout the Diocese of Scranton. The Diocesan Office for Parish Life provides leadership formation, spiritual renewal opportunities and many resources to all 110 parishes in our 11 counties. Working in collaboration with clergy and lay leadership, the Diocesan Office for Parish Life aims to help all people live out their faith fully, share it freely with others and transform the world in Christ.

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Yes! Bishop Bambera can count on me to support Catholic ministries and programs (check one):

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Please make checks payable to: **Diocesan Annual Appeal**

Diocesan Annual Appeal currently at 83% of Goal

Your Appeal Gifts Support the Following Ministries:

- Catholic Communications
- Catholic Social Services
- Catholic Education
- Seminarian Education & Retired Clergy Support
- Parish Life Initiatives
- Social Justice Grants to Parishes
- Faith Formation Grants to Parishes

A Full Listing of Parish Gifts To Date (as of Feb. 9) Appears on the Next Page

Cut and mail this Pledge Card to: 2023 Diocesan Annual Appeal, 300 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503

	<i>Progress to Parish Goal</i>		<i>Progress to Parish Goal</i>
All Saints Parish - Plymouth.....	\$15,706.00 / \$37,000.00 (42%)	St. Ann Basilica - Scranton.....	\$28,935.00 / \$30,000.00 (96%)
Annunciation Parish - Hazleton.....	\$18,849.00 / \$33,000.00 (57%)	St. Ann Parish - Shohola.....	\$19,663.00 / \$20,000.00 (98%)
Ascension Parish - Forest City.....	\$18,425.00 / \$25,000.00 (74%)	St. Ann Parish - Williamsport.....	\$49,540.00 / \$59,000.00 (84%)
Blessed Sacrament Parish - Throop.....	\$17,725.00 / \$16,000.00 (111%)	St. Barbara Parish - Exeter.....	\$19,048.00 / \$31,000.00 (61%)
BVM Queen of Peace Parish - Hawley.....	\$62,287.00 / \$76,000.00 (82%)	St. Boniface Parish - Williamsport.....	\$47,705.00 / \$60,000.00 (80%)
Christ the King Parish - Archbald.....	\$55,696.85 / \$67,000.00 (83%)	St. Brigid Parish - Friendsville.....	\$32,550.00 / \$22,000.00 (148%)
Corpus Christi Parish - West Pittston.....	\$37,600.00 / \$30,000.00 (125%)	St. Catherine of Siena Parish - Moscow.....	\$73,837.75 / \$63,000.00 (117%)
Divine Mercy Parish - Scranton.....	\$46,697.00 / \$63,000.00 (74%)	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish - Swoyersville..	\$44,580.00 / \$44,000.00 (101%)
Epiphany Parish - Sayre.....	\$58,648.00 / \$85,000.00 (69%)	St. Elizabeth Parish - Bear Creek.....	\$15,695.00 / \$24,000.00 (65%)
Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish - Hanover Twp..	\$22,495.00 / \$15,000.00 (150%)	St. Eulalia Parish - Roaring Brook Township....	\$29,703.24 / \$40,000.00 (74%)
Gate of Heaven Parish - Dallas.....	\$30,220.00 / \$47,000.00 (64%)	St. Faustina Kowalska Parish - Nanticoke.....	\$30,721.94 / \$47,000.00 (65%)
Good Shepherd Parish - Drums.....	\$12,035.00 / \$24,000.00 (50%)	St. Frances X. Cabrini Parish - Carverton.....	\$18,090.32 / \$13,000.00 (139%)
Holy Child Parish - Mansfield.....	\$25,144.00 / \$28,000.00 (90%)	St. Gregory Parish - Clarks Green.....	\$84,006.40 / \$74,000.00 (114%)
Holy Cross Parish - Olyphant.....	\$33,471.00 / \$47,000.00 (71%)	St. Ignatius Loyola Parish - Kingston.....	\$67,205.36 / \$77,000.00 (87%)
Holy Family Parish - Luzerne.....	\$44,374.32 / \$40,000.00 (111%)	St. John Bosco Parish - Conyngham.....	\$67,007.15 / \$58,000.00 (116%)
Holy Name of Jesus Parish - West Hazleton.....	\$10,830.00 / \$21,000.00 (52%)	St. John Neumann Parish - Lords Valley.....	\$19,167.00 / \$28,000.00 (68%)
Holy Name of Mary Parish - Montrose.....	\$20,250.00 / \$16,000.00 (127%)	St. John Neumann Parish - Scranton.....	\$21,038.00 / \$52,000.00 (40%)
Holy Rosary Parish - Hazleton.....	\$14,950.00 / \$17,000.00 (88%)	St. John Parish - E. Stroudsburg.....	\$34,428.00 / \$57,000.00 (60%)
Holy Spirit Parish - Mocanaqua.....	\$13,180.00 / \$28,000.00 (47%)	St. John the Baptist Parish - Larksville.....	\$16,955.00 / \$21,000.00 (81%)
Immaculate Conception Parish - Williamsport.....	\$22,710.00 / \$26,000.00 (87%)	St. John the Evangelist Parish - Honesdale....	\$59,647.00 / \$64,000.00 (93%)
Immaculate Conception Parish - Scranton.....	\$38,212.20 / \$40,000.00 (96%)	St. John the Evangelist Parish - Pittston.....	\$40,339.00 / \$54,000.00 (75%)
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish - Dushore.....	\$33,680.00 / \$38,000.00 (88%)	St. John Vianney Parish - Montdale.....	\$25,829.00 / \$30,000.00 (86%)
Mary, Mother of God Parish - Scranton.....	\$51,934.50 / \$56,000.00 (93%)	St. Joseph Mareello Parish - Pittston.....	\$30,137.00 / \$27,000.00 (112%)
Most Holy Trinity Parish - Cresco.....	\$39,655.20 / \$49,000.00 (81%)	St. Joseph Parish - Matamoras.....	\$33,198.00 / \$37,000.00 (90%)
Most Holy Trinity Parish - Susquehanna.....	\$22,002.90 / \$30,000.00 (73%)	St. Joseph the Worker Parish - Williamsport....	\$77,513.40 / \$75,000.00 (103%)
Most Precious Blood Parish - Hazleton.....	\$29,574.95 / \$36,000.00 (82%)	St. Jude Parish - Mountain Top.....	\$75,761.00 / \$79,000.00 (96%)
Nativity of Our Lord Parish - Duryea.....	\$39,240.00 / \$40,000.00 (98%)	St. Katharine Drexel Parish - Pleasant Mount..	\$18,830.00 / \$13,000.00 (145%)
Nativity of the BVM Parish - Tunkhannock.....	\$27,143.00 / \$32,000.00 (85%)	St. Lawrence Parish - S. Williamsport.....	\$24,125.00 / \$26,000.00 (93%)
Our Lady Help of Christians Parish - Dorrance....	\$17,010.00 / \$18,000.00 (95%)	St. Leo Parish - Ashley.....	\$18,046.00 / \$33,000.00 (55%)
Our Lady of Fatima Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$19,210.00 / \$30,000.00 (64%)	St. Lucy Parish - Scranton.....	\$5,836.00 / \$19,000.00 (31%)
Our Lady of Hope Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$30,028.50 / \$35,000.00 (86%)	St. Luke Parish - Jersey Shore.....	\$11,409.33 / \$16,000.00 (71%)
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish - Montoursville.....	\$33,827.00 / \$41,000.00 (83%)	St. Luke Parish - Stroudsburg.....	\$113,713.00 / \$114,000.00 (99%)
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish - Carbondale..	\$7,680.00 / \$23,000.00 (33%)	St. Maria Goretti Parish - Laffin.....	\$21,545.00 / \$42,000.00 (51%)
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish - Dunmore.....	\$42,166.50 / \$56,000.00 (75%)	St. Mary of the Lake Parish - Lake Winola.....	\$7,810.00 / \$12,000.00 (65%)
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish - Lake Silkworth..	\$18,782.00 / \$19,000.00 (99%)	St. Mary Parish - Waymart.....	\$23,286.00 / \$17,000.00 (137%)
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish - Wyalusing...	\$10,770.00 / \$10,000.00 (108%)	St. Matthew Parish - E. Stroudsburg.....	\$52,863.00 / \$60,000.00 (88%)
Our Lady of the Abingtons Parish - Dalton.....	\$8,340.00 / \$16,000.00 (52%)	St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish - Pocono Pines....	\$20,458.00 / \$24,000.00 (85%)
Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish - Pittston.....	\$11,410.00 / \$16,000.00 (71%)	St. Michael Parish - Canton.....	\$14,948.00 / \$12,000.00 (125%)
Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception - Freeland..	\$14,391.00 / \$26,000.00 (55%)	St. Michael Parish - Scranton.....	\$6,407.00 / \$9,000.00 (71%)
Our Lady of the Snows Parish - Clarks Summit....	\$70,155.40 / \$87,000.00 (81%)	St. Monica Parish - West Wyoming.....	\$25,350.00 / \$31,000.00 (82%)
Our Lady of Victory Parish - Harveys Lake.....	\$22,794.60 / \$37,000.00 (62%)	St. Nicholas Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$56,130.00 / \$52,000.00 (108%)
Our Lady of Victory Parish - Tannersville.....	\$47,511.00 / \$52,000.00 (91%)	St. Patrick Parish - Milford.....	\$32,550.00 / \$33,000.00 (99%)
Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish - Brodheadsville..	\$65,561.30 / \$58,000.00 (113%)	St. Patrick Parish - Nicholson.....	\$6,645.00 / \$9,000.00 (74%)
Prince of Peace Parish - Old Forge.....	\$15,220.00 / \$28,000.00 (54%)	St. Patrick Parish - Scranton.....	\$22,393.00 / \$42,000.00 (53%)
Queen of Angels Parish - Jessup.....	\$15,042.00 / \$26,000.00 (58%)	St. Patrick Parish - White Haven.....	\$6,407.00 / \$16,000.00 (40%)
Queen of Heaven Parish - Hazleton.....	\$20,975.00 / \$29,000.00 (72%)	St. Paul of the Cross Parish - Scranton.....	\$16,652.00 / \$52,000.00 (32%)
Queen of the Apostles Parish - Avoca.....	\$20,328.25 / \$23,000.00 (88%)	St. Paul Parish - Scranton.....	\$42,435.00 / \$66,000.00 (64%)
Resurrection Parish - Muncy.....	\$26,970.00 / \$33,000.00 (82%)	St. Peter Parish - Wellsboro.....	\$35,435.00 / \$43,000.00 (82%)
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish - Dupont.....	\$15,942.45 / \$30,000.00 (53%)	St. Peter's Cathedral - Scranton.....	\$119,977.92 / \$71,000.00 (169%)
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish - Peckville.....	\$52,364.77 / \$41,000.00 (128%)	St. Rita Parish - Gouldsboro.....	\$10,417.00 / \$14,000.00 (74%)
Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Parish - Jermyn...	\$12,691.40 / \$21,000.00 (60%)	St. Robert Bellarmine Parish - Wilkes-Barre....	\$28,460.00 / \$34,000.00 (84%)
SS Anthony & Rocco Parish - Dunmore.....	\$33,825.00 / \$47,000.00 (72%)	St. Rose of Lima Parish - Carbondale.....	\$45,317.00 / \$62,000.00 (73%)
SS Cyril & Methodius Parish - Hazleton.....	\$39,663.50 / \$43,000.00 (92%)	St. Therese Parish - Shavertown.....	\$87,625.00 / \$71,000.00 (123%)
SS Peter & Paul Parish - Plains.....	\$52,304.00 / \$50,000.00 (105%)	St. Thomas More Parish - Lake Ariel.....	\$40,119.40 / \$49,000.00 (82%)
SS Peter & Paul Parish - Scranton.....	\$9,735.00 / \$13,000.00 (75%)	St. Thomas the Apostle Parish - Elkland.....	\$8,058.00 / \$13,000.00 (62%)
SS Peter & Paul Parish - Towanda.....	\$35,245.00 / \$31,000.00 (114%)	St. Vincent de Paul Parish - Milford.....	\$41,075.00 / \$35,000.00 (117%)
St. Andrew Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$7,165.00 / \$17,000.00 (42%)	Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Dickson City	\$46,415.75 / \$55,000.00 (84%)

“Together, we are called to be agents of God’s love”

Ecumenical service offered churches opportunity to see one another as brothers and sisters

SCRANTON – More than 100 people came together at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Jan. 24, 2024, to observe the global Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christians were among those gathered at the Cathedral to uphold our commitment as disciples of Jesus, whose hope was that all of His followers may be one.

“As we put our faith into practice, we come to learn from one another, to see what we have in common and where we differ,”

Monsignor Vincent Grimalia, Coordinator for Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations for the Diocese of Scranton, said in welcoming the crowd. “The parable of the good Samaritan teaches us to show love in spite of our differences as children of God.”

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, led the Ecumenical Prayer Service. Bishop Bambera serves as the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

He urges Christians throughout the United States to unite across denominational lines and pray for peace.

“Given the paralyzing nature of polarization and tragedy of war that have spread throughout our world today, the importance of living the love of Christ in our own circumstances cannot be overemphasized,” Bishop Bambera said. “May Christians throughout our country come together across denominational lines to pray for peace in our world and an end to the sad divisions that prevent us from fully loving each other as Christ loves us all.”

The theme for this year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was, “You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself.” (Luke 10:27)

The Reverend Rebecca Barnes of Saint Luke Episcopal Church in Scranton focused on that theme and the Gospel reading of the good Samaritan as offered a sermon.

“‘Who is my neighbor’ is a central question in our church, in our congregations and communities, in our ecumenical and interfaith conversations today. It is a question in our society at large,” Mother Barnes said. “Though we may not wish to admit it, I wonder how often do we think that people with whom we disagree or people who are different than us, don’t really deserve God’s mercy, don’t really deserve saving.”

In using the Gospel parable, she explained that “mercy is a gift freely given” by God, who uses it “for our weaknesses, our distress, our fear and our anxiety.”

In a world where that mercy might currently be in short supply, Mother Barnes challenged those in attendance to be like the good Samaritan and be courageous enough to act as each other’s neighbor.



Left: The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, presided over an Ecumenical Celebration of the Word of God Jan. 24, 2024, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. Presenters at the Prayer Service included, from left: Monsignor Vincent J. Grimalia, Diocesan Coordinator for Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations; Rev. Lory Ryan, Presbyterian Church of Mountain Top; Most Rev. Anthony Mikovsky,

“Together, we are called to be agents of God’s love, mercy, and healing. We are called to love God and love our neighbor. That is everyone – because we are all made in the image of God. We are all children of the one God – and so – we are all more than even neighbors. We are brothers and sisters, one of another,” she said.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity started in 1908 when Father Paul Wattson, SA, the founder of the religious order, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, conceived of the idea of a Christian Unity Octave – an observation of eight days of prayer – for an end to divisions between Christians.

Prime Bishop, Polish National Catholic Church, Scranton; Bishop Bambera; Proto Deacon Sergei Kapral, Holy Resurrection Orthodox Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre; Rev. Russell McDougall, C.S.C., King’s College; The Rev. Rebecca Barnes, Pastor, Saint Luke’s Episcopal Church, Scranton; Rev. Carmen G. Bolock, Ecumenical Officer for the Central Diocese Polish National Catholic Church, Duryea; Rev. Doctor Bonnie Bates, Penn Northeast Conference, United Church of Christ, Palmerton. (Photos/Michael Melisky)



Attending a dinner hosted by Bishop Bambera for members of the local Orthodox, Eastern Catholic and Latin Rite clergy on Jan. 22, 2024, were, front row, from left: Msgr. Vincent Grimalia, Bishop Bambera, Very Rev. John Kowalczyk. Second row: Rev. Michael Lepa, Rev. Paul Witek. Third row: Rev. Andrii Dumnych, Rev. Roman Vasylynka, Rev. Robert Simon. Fourth row: Rev. Edward Shestak, Rev. John Cigan, Proto Deacon Sergei Kapral. Fifth row: Rev. Gerald Shantillo, Rev. Myron Myronyuk, Msgr. Dale Rupert. Sixth row: Rev. Jeffrey Tudgay.



Bishop Bambera and priests of the Diocese of Scranton hosted a dinner meeting for Polish National Catholic Church clergy on Jan. 23, 2024. Front row, from left: Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, Bishop Bambera, Msgr. Vincent Grimalia. Second row: Rev. Thomas Looney, C.S.C., Rev. Robert Simon, Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski. Third row: Rev. Boguslaw Janiec. Fourth row: Msgr. Patrick Pratico, Rev. Lucian Urbaniak, Rev. Carmen Bolock. Fifth row: Rev. Gerald Shantillo, Rev. John Polednak, Msgr. Dale Rupert. Sixth row: Rev. Jeffrey Tudgay.

Cathedral of Saint Peter to host Saint Patrick's Parade Day Mass March 9

SCRANTON – The annual Saint Patrick's Parade Day Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 9, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. All are welcome to attend.

The liturgy is traditionally held in conjunction with the city of Scranton's annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade. Following the Mass, the Saint Patrick's Parade is expected to take to the streets of the Electric City beginning at 11:45 a.m.



Members of the Society of Irish Women participate in the Saint Patrick's Parade Day Mass in 2023. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the Mass. Various priests from the Diocese of Scranton are expected to concelebrate the Mass.

The Mass will be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and will be rebroadcast several times the following week. It will also be available for viewing on the Diocese of Scranton's YouTube Channel.

This year marks the 62nd Anniversary of the Saint Patrick's Parade in Scranton.



The Saint Patrick's Parade Day Mass is one that many children enjoy before marching.

APPOINTMENTS

His Excellency, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, announces the following appointments, effective as indicated:

Reverend Duane J. Gavitt, from Pastor, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, and Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, to Retirement, due to Reasons of Health, effective January 27, 2024.

Reverend Rafael O'Farril Bermudez Gonzalez, from ministry in Manangua, Nicaragua, to Parochial Vicar, Queen of Heaven Parish, Hazleton, effective January 27, 2024. Father will reside at Annunciation Parish, Hazleton.

PARISH LIFE COORDINATOR

Deacon Vincent M. Oberto, to Parish Life Coordinator, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, and Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton. As Parish Life Coordinator, Deacon Oberto will provide on-site pastoral care in the absence of a pastor. **Reverend Connell A. McHugh**, will serve as Sacramental Minister providing Mass and the other sacraments on a regular basis. **Reverend Michael J. Piccola**, Dean of the Hazleton Deanery, will serve as Priest Moderator. Effective January 27, 2024.



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

- February 15** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Kingston Deanery
Holy Family Parish, Luzerne, 7:00 p.m.
- February 17** - Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen
Wilkes-Barre, 8:45 a.m.
- February 18** - Rite of Election & Call to Continuing Conversion
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 2:30 p.m.
- February 20** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Stroudsburg Deanery
Our Lady of Victory Parish, Tannersville, 7:00 p.m.
- February 21** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Hazleton Deanery
Most Precious Blood Parish, Hazleton, 7:00 p.m.
- February 22** - School Mass for Saint Jude School
Saint Jude Church, Mountain Top, 9:00 a.m.
- February 22** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Carbondale Deanery
Christ the King Parish, Archbald, 7:00 p.m.
- February 27** - School Mass for Wyoming Area Catholic School
Exeter, 9:00 a.m.
- February 27** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Dunmore Deanery
Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Twp., 7:00 p.m.
- February 28** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Williamsport Deanery
St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Williamsport, 7:00 p.m.
- February 29** - School Mass for Our Lady of Peace School
Saint Gregory Parish, Clarks Green, 9:00 a.m.
- February 29** - Lenten Day of Reflection for Priests
Diocesan Pastoral Center, Scranton, Noon
- February 29** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Clarks Summit Deanery
Nativity of the BVM Parish, Tunkhannock, 7:00 p.m.
- March 3** - Mass with Commissioning Ceremony for Lay Ministers
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.
- March 5** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Pittston Deanery
Saint Joseph Marelllo Parish, Pittston, 7:00 p.m.
- March 6** - School Mass for Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School
Saint Nicholas Church, Wilkes-Barre, 9 a.m.
- March 6** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Honesdale Deanery
Saint John Neumann Parish, Lords Valley, 7:00 p.m.
- March 7** - School Mass for All Saints Academy
Saint Patrick Parish, Scranton, 9:00 a.m.
- March 7** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Sayre Deanery
Epiphany Parish, Sayre, 7:00 p.m.

Hazleton parishes join together to celebrate Feast of Our Lady of Altigracia

HAZLETON – An estimated 1,500 people packed into the gymnasium at Holy Family Academy on Jan. 21, 2024, to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Altigracia.

The colorful celebration was filled with beautiful music and brought together several parishes in the greater Hazleton area that have Spanish Masses.

“What we had today was a big celebration, three parishes together and everybody as Dominican, but we also got people from other communities who are not Dominican because they enjoy gathering together,” Father Neftali Feliz-Sena, Assistant Pastor, Annunciation Parish, said.

Our Lady of Altigracia is the patroness of the Dominican Republic.

“She is the Queen of the Universal Church and the Hispanic people in particular



An estimated 1,500 people filled the gymnasium of Holy Family Academy to celebrate Mass in honor of the Feast of Our Lady of Altigracia on Jan. 21, 2024.

have a great love for their mother. You see how mothers are revered and honored in

their culture and it falls into line very naturally that the mother of God, who is our mother, would be the mother of Dominicans and all of us,” Father Kevin Miller, Pastor, Annunciation Parish, explained.

The Mass was filled with young people, multi-generational families, and many others coming together to celebrate their culture and heritage.

“They never want to forget how important it is to keep their language and to be able to practice their faith with love and joy,” Father

Miller added.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera,

Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for the special celebration. At the beginning of the liturgy, the crowds cheered and applauded as Bishop Bambera was presented with a handmade mitre for the Eucharistic celebration.

During his homily, the Bishop reminded the crowd that Mary was the first disciple of Jesus.

“Mary was not only a recipient of God’s mercy but also an instrument through which that same mercy poured into the lives of others,” Bishop Bambera said.

Jose Rafael Rodriguez, parishioner of Annunciation Parish, said he was amazed at the turnout for the celebration.

“The love for Altigracia is humongous,” he said. “We love her kindness and what she does for the Dominican people. She is our protector.”

Pastor participates in groundbreaking for new State Police Academy in Hershey

HERSHEY - As state officials broke ground on a new Pennsylvania State Police Academy on Dec. 18, 2023, they turned to a local pastor to offer a blessing.

Father Thomas M. Muldowney, Pastor, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow, who also serves as Chaplain for the Pennsylvania State Police, participated in a press conference as design plans for the new training facility were released.

The new state-of-the-art facility is expected to be the most comprehensive update to the Academy since it opened in 1960. Multiple new buildings, totaling 366,000 square feet, are proposed for the 146-acre site in Hershey.

The transcript of Father Muldowney’s prayer is below:

“Today, with gratitude and anticipation, we gather for the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Pennsylvania State Police Academy. We invoke the spirit of dedication, unity, and commitment as we lay the foundation for a place that will shape the future guardians of our Commonwealth. May this ceremony mark the beginning of a home where knowledge, discipline, and honor will be instilled in those who will serve and



Father Thomas M. Muldowney offers a blessing at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new PSP Academy in Hershey on Dec. 18, 2023.

protect our citizens. Let this groundbreaking be a symbol of progress, unity, and the enduring legacy of service to our state. May this academy stand as a testament to the values of integrity, courage, and excellence that will echo through the generations of law enforcement officers trained within its walls. With this groundbreaking, we embark on a journey toward a safer, stronger, and more just society. Invoking God’s blessing on the Pennsylvania State Police Academy, a beacon of hope, training, and service.

“We ask this in your holy name. Amen.”

More than 2,200 diapers collected during 2024 Diocesan ‘Mass for Life’

SCRANTON - Just two days after the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., the faithful in the Diocese of Scranton gathered together at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton for the annual 'Mass for Life' on Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist.

“The overturning of Roe has given the Pro-Life cause great hope. It has not, however, ended the work that still needs to be done to create a culture of life in our land. And that, brothers and sisters, is why we pray so intently at this Mass today,” Bishop Bambera said during his homily.

The bishop said we all must work to preserve and protect human life at all stages, from conception to natural death.

“Our greatest efforts in building a culture of life are discovered when we courageously speak the truth, as Jesus has proclaimed it, and when we, in turn, respond to those whose beliefs fall short of treating all lives with dignity and respect with respect, dignity and love,” he added.

Those who attended the Mass were encouraged to bring new packages of diapers

and wipes to be donated to local mothers and babies in need.

Because of the generosity of the faithful, more than 2,200 diapers were collected at the Mass. The diapers were all given to the Providence Pregnancy Center in Scranton, Saint Joseph’s Center in Dunmore and Catholic Social Services.

All three organizations say they are always in need of donations. Currently, workers say their biggest needs are newborn diapers and newborn clothing. Donations can be made directly to any one of the three organizations.



Parishioners attending the 2024 ‘Mass for Life’ at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Jan. 21, 2024, donated more than 2,200 diapers to benefit local agencies that help mothers and babies.

Diocesan groups attend March for Life in support of moms, children

WASHINGTON — Against gray skies and falling snow, thousands of people flocked Jan. 19 to the nation's capital for the national March for Life, gathering them under the theme "With every woman, for every child," showing their resolve amid the piercing cold to make abortion eventually "unthinkable" in the U.S.

The March for Life began in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which once legalized abortion nationwide, and gathers pro-life advocates from across the U.S. This year's march — its second year since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe* in 2022 — took place as winter weather put much of the U.S. in a deep freeze, snarling transportation and canceling flights.

The wintry weather certainly didn't deter two hearty Catholic youth ministry groups from the Diocese of Scranton's Poconos region — Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville and Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg — from traveling together for the 51st March for Life this year.

Sharing bus accommodations, the young faithful and their chaperones made the pro-life pilgrimage south, beginning in Arlington, Va., for the "Life is Very Good" rally on Thursday evening, Jan. 18, followed by the iconic march in the nation's capital on Friday.

"As a faithful Catholic and citizen of the United States, I feel



"ORANGE" YOU GLAD YOU'RE PRO-LIFE! — The so-called "Orange Cap Brigade" from Our Lady of Queen of Peace Parish Youth Ministry, Brodheadsville (pictured above), and Saint Matthew Parish Youth Ministry, East Stroudsburg (photo below), are shown at this year's National March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 19. The Brodheadsville group was led by their pastor, Father Bob Simon (pictured far right); Jill Salvi, Queen of Peace Parish youth minister; and Linda Carbone, religious education director. Parish student participants included Jalissa Mantilla, Zach Levin, Jared Mantilla, Jayden Mantilla, Kateri Tilton, Billy Corbo, Marcellina Cavalier, Brianna Tilton, Isabella Altemose, Maria Altemose, Alex Guachichulca and Dominico Corbo.

it is my responsibility to go to Washington to pray for respect for all human life and to give witness by marching," Father Bob Simon, pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, said.

Expressing her heartfelt sentiments was Queen of Peace student participant Marcellina Cavalier, 17, who shared, "Some may think there is not much point to the (Washington) march anymore, but I say the fight is not over; it is just begun."

Jill Salvi, Queen of Peace director of youth ministry, related how "extremely proud" she is of the parish teenagers who made the pro-life pilgrimage. "It takes courage, especially in our society today, to stand up for life and to join the thousands on a march that declares life is sacred and precious, and needs to be protected," she said.

"The positive and life-changing event is huge; it turned the tides of the lives of babies who would have been killed like millions before them," Brianna Tilton, 14, said, referring to the "inspirational" March for Life. "The resilience and courage of thousands of the people who march show the support and love of pro-lifers. In my personal experience of many years of marches, it is amazing to see so much positivity, love, life and support of everyone attending."

Fellow teen Billy Corbo chimed in, "The march is an annual event for me and my family. I've been going since I was in the womb! Every year I enjoy the march and will keep marching for life for years to come."

Chaperoning the group from Saint Matthew Parish was Wendy Portorreal, who spoke of this year's March for Life as "moving



"Marchers for Life" from Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg were headed by Sean Robbins, director of youth & college ministry. Shown, foreground from left: Diana Loja, Natalia Morocho, Miles Portorreal, Wendy Portorreal, Meghan Morrissey, Maycol Paguay, Justin Acosta and Shaellys Hernandez. Background, from left: Brianna Ibanez, Ana Loja, Sean Robbins, Chris Lima and Brando Mauro.

Young & Proud to be Pro-Life

"The forces of evil will always attack life, so there will never be a time to stop making sacrifices — bus rides, time off from work, school, etc. — to witness to the fact that life is not only good, but very good." — Marcellina Cavalier, 17



"It was amazing to be surrounded by so many people praying and wanting to represent the lives of the unborn. Everyone (should) experience the March for Life at some point... and represent what we stand for as Catholics in this battle." — Isabella Altemose, 14

"The March for Life has been a major event of my life, year after year. Being part of such a noble cause with so many young people is incredibly inspiring and gives much hope for the future of our world." — Dominico Corbo, 17



"I am glad that the march gave me an opportunity to be a part of something I feel so strongly about. Being a facilitator for the ISLI (International Student Leadership Institute) retreat has also helped me realize not to be scared to stand up for what I know is right." — Maria Altemose, 17

"Babies are dying to live, not living to die." — Jayden Mantilla, 17



"All life is precious, even the unborn lives." — Jalissa Mantilla, 16

"Unborn life is cool; killing them is cruel." — Jared Mantilla, 14



experience," as she attended with her son, Miles.

"Listening to the personal accounts from women who had contemplated abortion was something I will never forget," she said. "Their courage to share their stories was touching."

For Amelia Dodson, a Saint Matthew's parishioner and student at nearby East Stroudsburg University who participated in this year's march, she related, "It was relieving to have people answer my questions about abortion and realize how I can share pro-life resources with others."

Holy Redeemer dedicates new learning center in honor of late principal

WILKES-BARRE – Holy Redeemer High School honored the legacy of its late principal by dedicating a new learning center in her honor Jan. 28, 2024.

In front of dozens of family members, fellow educators and friends, the Doreen Dougherty Digital Learning Commons was blessed and put into use.

“The day my mother came into Holy Redeemer, she saw the library and immediately had a vision for what it could be,” daughter Shaina Aquilina said. “To see it really come to life today has been something that is truly special and unique.”

Dougherty died last August after an illness. She had been working on transforming the school’s library into an environment that better met student needs at the time of her passing since she became principal of the building in 2019.

“The library was previously just somewhere you would grab a book and go back to class and now it feels like more of a community atmosphere. Every table has room for more than one person,” son Devin Dougherty explained.

The new space is filled with desks, sofas, smart boards, and computers – an environment better suited to help students engage in the digital era.

“The Digital Learning Commons really became a space for the future and a space where students can have that college feel,” principal Cody Opalka stated.

Opalka said Dougherty talked often about space, so naming it after her will forever highlight the lasting impact on those around her.

“Doreen was such a servant leader. She would make time for you even if she

had a million things going on,” Opalka added. “Her dedication and passion for education made her the perfect principal for Holy Redeemer.”

For Doreen’s family, the word many repeated at the dedication ceremony was “grateful.”

“I’m so grateful that they put in the time, effort and dedication that it took to make this space everything she wanted it to be and more,” Aquilina said.

“I just want to thank everyone. It has been amazing to see the impact and legacy she has left and will continue to leave on everyone,” Dougherty added.



Family, friends and staff of Holy Redeemer gather on Jan. 28, 2024, for the dedication of the Doreen Dougherty Digital Learning Commons (Photo/Dan Piazza)

Service projects emphasized as schools celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2024

DUNMORE – A central aspect of Catholic education is learning the importance of service to others. As part of Catholic Schools Week, every Catholic school participates in service activities to showcase how to make the world a better place.

At Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School, students wrote letters to their parish priests, collected personal care items for veterans at Gino Merli Veterans Center and held a cereal box domino event on Feb. 2, 2024.

“We started our cereal box domino during COVID. We did it upstairs in the hallway and it became a thing. The kids really liked it,” Maryelizabeth Shattin, principal, said.

Students are invited to bring in a box of their favorite cereal and the eighth grade set up all of boxes in a path that would have them all fall in the pattern of dominoes.

“It is really a great way for us to help others. We turned it into a class competition as well. The class that collects the most, in ounces, gets a dress down day,” Shattin added.

The whole school looked on and cheered as the cereal boxes all started to topple on each other.

More than just providing a few exciting minutes, all the cereal boxes were



A student works to create a ‘Cereal Box Domino’ on Feb. 2, 2024.

then donated to a worthy community cause.

“They are going to a really good cause. They are going to Saint Ann’s food pantry,” eighth grader Keira Lalli explained. “We do a lot of service projects throughout the year, and we give to people in need, and it shows that we care for people.”

Shattin said events like the cereal box domino are an easy, fun way to instill Christian values of service and giving in the students – with the goal of making them good Christians.

“We listen to the Gospel and listen to the things Jesus did, helping those around him, and we want to instill that in our students,” she said. “We want them to walk in Jesus’ shoes.”

Faculty ‘gets in the game’ to celebrate Catholic Schools Week in Wilkes-Barre

WILKES-BARRE – There is no question that the eighth graders at Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary School appreciate their teachers – but that didn’t mean they would show them any mercy on the volleyball court.

On Tuesday, Jan. 30, the Wilkes-Barre school held its annual 8th grade vs. teachers volleyball game in the school gym as part of Catholic Schools Week 2024.

Leading up to the game, eighth grader Megan Ohrin, predicted a fun time.

“We’re going to get some good competition going between us,” she said. “It’s going to be a lot of fun. It’s going to be really funny.”

Patrice Perry, a third-grade teacher, said she loves Catholic Schools Week because there are different activities – like the volleyball game – that take place each day.

“The kids are thrilled to see their teachers out there – being one of the kids,” Perry explained.

The teachers – who wore black t-shirts with their name ‘Breakroom Bandits’ on the front – ended up taking home the win in the fiercely-fought competition in front of the whole school.

“We get so close with them,” eighth



Eighth grade students play volleyball against their teachers at St. Nicholas-St. Mary School on Jan. 30, 2024.

grader Lilah Hilal said of her teachers. “All the teachers have helped me so much.”

“We have great teachers,” Ohrin added. “Everyone knows everyone. Everyone is really close.”

Teachers are the backbone of Catholic Schools. While many think Catholic Schools Week is just for students, in reality, it also helps to honor teachers, administrators, staff and volunteers who help to create a family-like atmosphere in every building.

“We always call it our Saint Nick-Saint Mary family because that is what we are every day. Faculty, student, staff, everyone works together,” Perry explained.

Importance of Catholic faith plays prominent role in Catholic Schools Week

WILLIAMSPORT – Amid many fun and engaging activities that take place during Catholic Schools Week – the importance of faith and religion never take a back seat.

Every Catholic school in the Diocese of Scranton held special Masses during Catholic Schools Week – and some like Saint John Neumann Regional Academy – also prayed the rosary when they came together on Jan. 31, 2024.

“We had all three of our buildings here. We bring the whole Academy together to celebrate Mass, our identity, to live out our mission,” principal Alisia McNamee said.

The Mass, which was held at Saint

Boniface Parish, featured older students sitting next to younger students – a hallmark of a ‘mentorship program’ that has positively impacted many kids.

“Since I came here, the seniors mentored me and since then I’ve been mentoring kids younger than me and it helped me to develop as a person,” senior Aidan Vogt explained.

The Catholic Schools Week Mass at Saint John Neumann Regional Academy was celebrated by Father Bert Kozen, V.F., Chaplain, and concelebrated by Father Glenn McCreary, V.E., Pastor, Saint Boniface and Saint Lawrence Parishes; Father Sean Carpenter, Pastor, Resurrection

Parish; and Father Shawn Simchock, Administrator, Saint Ann Parish.

Senior Malachi Coleman says Saint John Neumann Regional Academy has taught him many Christian values – including how to be humble, help others, and have love and dignity for all people.

“They really do shape you well with Christian values, to help you go out into the world and be a shining light,” he said.

Elizabeth Weller, another senior at Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School, agreed.

“I live out my faith just by being kind and lending a hand to others. If anyone is struggling, I always try to help them.”



Students from Saint John Neumann Regional Academy in Williamsport gather for Mass at Saint Boniface Parish Jan. 31, 2024, in celebration of Catholic Schools Week.

Duryea school collects hundreds of soup cans as part of ‘Soup Can Derby’

DURYEA – Cans of chicken noodle, vegetable and tomato soup weren’t just flying off store shelves recently. They were rolling down ramps in a heated competition inside Holy Rosary School.

As part of Catholic Schools Week 2024, the Duryea school held its annual ‘Soup Can Derby’ to benefit the Pittston food pantry. Students were invited to bring in cans of soup on Jan. 29 – and test how fast they would go down a plywood platform in the school gym against other student’s cans.

“It is truly exciting. We get to dress up and not only have fun with things like the soup can derby racing, but we also get to donate and give back to our community,” seventh grader Julianna Ciuccio said.

On only the first day, students collected 386 soup cans and had a goal of surpassing 450 cans by the end of the week.

“Throughout the year we do many service projects. We sent Christmas stockings to Janet Weis (Children’s Hospital) for kids that are stuck in the hospital during the holiday,” Debbie Brady, Holy Rosary’s 8th grade teacher, explained. “The students just made soup the other day and brought it up to Crossin Towers and Father Michael helped with that.”

Each year, Holy Rosary students enjoy challenging their friends in the ‘Soup Can Derby.’ They understand, however, that it benefits a very important cause.

“Jesus went out with His disciples and



Holy Rosary School in Duryea held a ‘Soup Can Derby’ on Jan. 29, 2024.

gave to those who needed it, so this is us going out, we’re doing what Jesus wants us to do and give to those in need,” seventh grader Haley Karboski explained.

As part of Catholic Schools Week, Holy Rosary students also got to participate in an Irish Step Dance class, talent show, and wacky activities. In addition to the soup cans, they also collected socks for those in need and sold candy to benefit the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters who have been so integral to the history of the school.

Jackie Keating, who is not only the 6th grade teacher at Holy Rosary, but a parent of three daughters at the school, said she is constantly amazed by how receptive students are to the Christian values they are being taught.

“I think the one thing that stands out to everyone is the foundation of Christ,” Keating explained. “My gets get to experience that and live that every single day and not just on Sunday at Mass!”

Harlem Wizards entertain, and teach, students at Good Shepherd Academy

KINGSTON – Students at Good Shepherd Academy were jumping with joy and the gymnasium was filled with laughter Feb. 1, as a member of the Harlem Wizards entertained and educated the students during a Catholic Schools Week assembly.

“It was our first experience with the Harlem Wizards,” Jim Jones, principal, said. “They deliver an inspirational message, and they couple that message around athletics and basketball, and they interweave that message with our children. While they’re seeing something fun, they’re leaving with a message that they need to be good people, have upstanding values and need to treat others with respect.”

For an hour, the students were treated to comedic skits, ball-handling tricks and more.

“I always look forward to Catholic Schools Week as just a break from regular school,” eighth grader Chase Liska said. “You don’t have to worry so much about work and different projects.”

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Catholic Schools Week. In addition to the Harlem Wizards assembly, Good Shepherd also had a ‘Science in Motion’ presentation, talent show, spirit day and much more.

“It gives us a week to celebrate not only our academics, but we celebrate our teachers and our students, we celebrate our PTA, we celebrate our athletic associations, we celebrate everything that is good about Catholic education,” Jones said. “Everything



A member of the Harlem Wizards interacts with Good Shepherd Academy students.

at Good Shepherd, we begin in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These students are the future of our church. They’re the future of society.”

As she prepares to move onto high school next year, eighth grader Sienna Curry said she has been given both the academic and spiritual foundation to succeed.

“They definitely prepare us. We do a lot of service projects and work together,” she said. “This school is a family. It is a great community to be in.”

While Catholic Schools Week is always a fun experience, it is also a time to highlight why Catholic schools are great places of academic excellence and faith-filled mission.

“Here at Good Shepherd, we place our utmost trust in our delivery of the academics, the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical growth of children. We’re setting the stage for their futures,” Jones said.

Diocese of Scranton

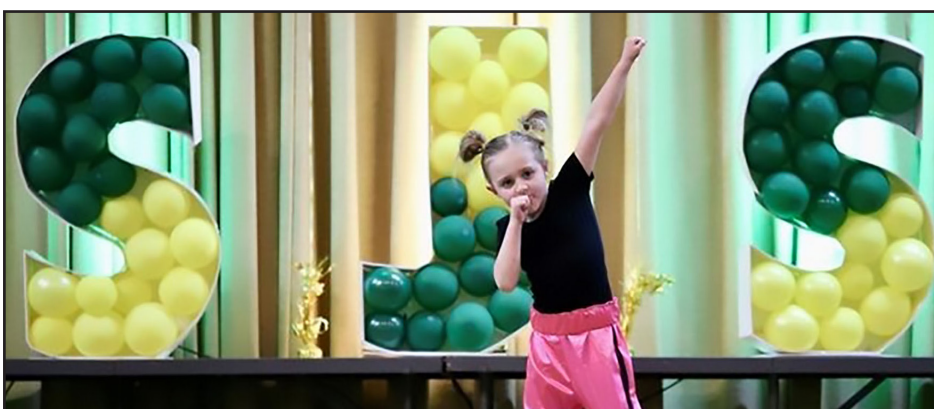
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The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, recently celebrated Mass at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre**. Bishop shared with the students and faculty that we are called to “Do What We Can” for others and that is how people will see the power and presence of God.



Callie Michaels, a student at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**, dances her heart out during the school’s “SJS’s Got Talent” Catholic Schools Week Talent Show.



It was a groovy time at **All Saints Academy in Scranton**. As part of Catholic Schools Week, students danced through the decades while making a monetary donation in support of the Doreen Dougherty Scholarship Foundation, raising more than \$800.



The community of **La Salle Academy in Jessup** appreciates the pastors who partner with them to support the mission of the school. This year, students celebrated the pastors of our Adopt-A-Priest program, like here with Father Gerard M. McGlone from Queen of Angels Parish, and thanked them by delivering donuts.



Students at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** wrapped up Catholic Schools Week with “Falcon Friday,” the return of our annual basketball shoot-out and showing off their Falcon Spirit!



The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, celebrated Mass with the students and faculty of **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore**, during which he asked the school community to “flavor the world with God’s goodness by showing kindness to all.” After Mass, he posed with the fourth grade class who served as music ministers.



Seniors at Saint John Neumann High School in Williamsport showed their appreciation to teachers and staff by giving a shirt to someone who has made an impact on their life during their academic career.



Father Michael Bryant, pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Parish, treated the students of Holy Rosary School in Duryea to ice cream sweets as the community celebrates Catholic Schools Week.



During Catholic Schools Week, students at Holy Cross High School in Dunmore showed off their expansive knowledge of current events, entertainment, sports and general trivia, as well as impressive dance moves during a visit from *The Brain Show*.



Pre-K 4 students at Epiphany School in Sayre celebrated the start of Catholic Schools Week by making pocket rosaries using beads and pipe cleaners.



Faculty and students at Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg donated over 400 items for the "Cereal Box Domino Challenge" with the boxes lining the hallways for an epic domino train during Catholic Schools Week. All the cereal was then donated to the Saint Matthew Parish Food Pantry in East Stroudsburg.



It's cool to be at Holy Family Academy in Hazleton! During Catholic Schools Week, students and faculty built their own sweet snow cones using the Kona Ice Machine.



Monsignor John Sempa, pastor of Corpus Christi and Saint Barbara Parishes, stops to visit some Chess Club members from Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter during the school's Open House during Catholic Schools Week.



Students at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg kicked off Catholic Schools Week with their annual "Souper Bowl" food drive for the less fortunate.



Students from Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport paired up with their high school buddies to participate in STREAM activities during Catholic Schools Week. Activities ranged from science, technology, exercise, geography and art.

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Mass for Persons with Disabilities showcases “abilities” of all people

SCRANTON — Practice certainly paid off for Gerard Wazeter, who served as a lector for the Mass for Persons with Disabilities which was held on Feb. 11, 2024.

“I practiced a lot. I felt comfortable,” he said.

This year was the fourth time the Trucksville resident attended the special Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. He also served as lector several years ago.

“It made me feel great,”



Gerard Wazeter of Trucksville proclaims the second reading during the Mass for Persons with Disabilities on Feb. 11, 2024.



Numerous residents of Saint Joseph's Center bless us with their presence and participation in the Mass for Persons with Disabilities.

Wazeter added. “It made me feel special.”

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for the celebration on the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time. In his homily, he noted how Pope Francis offered his monthly prayer intention for people with disabilities in December.

Bishop Bambera quoted the Holy Father, saying, “People with disabilities are the most fragile among us. Some of them suffer rejection rooted in either ignorance or prejudice which then marginalizes them. Civil institutions need to support their projects through access to education, employment and places where they can express their creativity. Programs and initiatives are needed that promote their inclusion. Above all else, big hearts are needed who want to accompany them. It means changing our mentality a little and opening ourselves to the abilities and talents of these people who are merely differently abled both in society as well as in the life of the Church.”

Those words touched Patrick Cannon of Nanticoke, who has attended the Mass for Persons with Disabilities since it began.

“It was beautiful. I enjoy this every year,” he said. “It touches me because it helps people like me that have disabilities. It brings everybody closer as a family.”

Several local organizations, including Saint Joseph's Center, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community and the Order of Alhambra, local caravan Alhambra #4 in Wilkes-Barre, partner with the Diocese of Scranton for the Mass.

“We’re a Catholic organization that was founded in 1904 and we assist those with intellectual disabilities,” Ada Magni, Scribe of the Exchequer with the Order of Alhambra, explained. “We offer a summer festival each year. We have dinner dances for those with Special Olympics.”

Magni says the Mass for Persons with Disabilities is important because it shows that everyone has gifts and talents that can be used — especially in the life of the church. Many people with disabilities served as greeters, ushers, lectors, and gift bearers for the Mass.

“It touches people’s hearts to really see their kindness and their goodness,” she said. “They shine through in so many ways. As much as we try to touch their lives, they impact us in so many ways!”

YOU Can Feed and Clothe People In Need!

More than 250 men, women and children rely on Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen for a daily meal, food for their household, and clothing to keep warm.

These services include the daily midday meal and three evening suppers at the Kitchen in Scranton as well as weekly meals at parish locations and high-rise housing buildings in Carbondale and Olyphant, and also weekly meals at parish sites in Roaring Brook Township and Archbald. The Kitchen also operates a Client-Choice Food Pantry and a Free Clothing Store, which has expanded with a Free Clothing Mobile Trailer to bring clothing items to those in need at various locations.

All of this is only possible through the dedicated service of our staff and volunteers, and your generous financial support for the annual Host-for-a-Day campaign. For a donation of \$100 or more, an individual, a family, a business, a community organization or faith-based group can help sponsor a day's meal at the Kitchen and be recognized as a “host” of that meal. Major sponsorship levels are also available beginning at \$500.

Now more than ever, our brothers and sisters in need are relying on us for help. Thanks to the generosity of individuals and organizations in our community, Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen continues to serve the most needy among us with hot, nutritious meals and other services each day.

Recent contributors to the Host-for-a-Day campaign are receiving an appeal directly from the Kitchen through the mail or will be contacted by a member of the Advisory Board.



Donations can also be made by:

Calling the Kitchen at 570-342-5556, online at stfranciskitchen.org, [facebook.com/stfranciskitchen](https://www.facebook.com/stfranciskitchen), text SFAK to 26989, or sending a check to Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen, 500 Penn Avenue, Scranton PA 18509

Thank You For Your Support!

The culmination of the campaign will be celebrated at Fiorelli's in Peckville on Wednesday, April 10, at 6 p.m. RSVPs are required by March 30. Those who would like to sponsor the reception are asked to call the Kitchen at 570-342-5556.



'Evening of Gratitude' to honor Ignatian Volunteer Corps visionaries

SCRANTON – Three individuals, who have played an instrumental role in bringing the Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) to northeastern Pennsylvania, will be recognized at a special reception next month.

An Evening of Gratitude is planned for Thursday, March 14, 2024, in which Patrick McMahon will be honored with the Madonna Della Strada Award, and Grace and Denny Dawgert will be presented with the IVC Spirituality Award. The event will be held from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Scranton Preparatory School.

Since being brought to the greater Scranton area roughly a decade ago, the Ignatian Volunteer Corps has matched men and women, age 50 and better, with meaningful opportunities to serve the needs of people who are poor, to work for a more just society, and to grow deeper in their faith.

Ignatian volunteers commit to working one or two days per week (generally eight to 16 hours) for a period of ten months at a local service agency that serves the poor or addresses poverty-related issues.

"It is amazing," Pat McMahon said, describing the program he helped bring to the region.

McMahon is regarded as the local program's visionary and its first shepherd. He is credited with organizing a planning committee and helping to raise money to bring IVC NEPA to life. McMahon continues to serve as the chairperson of the IVC NEPA Advisory Council and currently serves as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer in Lackawanna County through the program.

"It took us a couple years once we started the process," the now semi-retired businessman reflected in getting the program off the ground.

While he has served the

community for decades, when McMahon became a CASA volunteer last June, he saw the program from an entirely new angle.

"It is one thing to write donation checks or be on a board. It's another thing to have your feet on the street and that is what I wanted," he explained.

"I wanted my feet on the street. You get so much more back by actually serving others."

The Madonna Della Strada Award that McMahon will receive in March is named after the first church that Ignatius and the early Jesuits obtained to meet the needs of Rome's underserved, the Sancta Maria Della Strada.

At the same reception, Denny and Grace Dawgert will receive the IVC Spirituality Award. The award honors individuals

demonstrating what it means to live committed to ongoing reflection.

"I feel very honored but it also feels strange," Grace said. "I've never done anything ever thinking there would be a prize ... I was just doing it because I like it."

The Dawgerts were among the first people that McMahon reached out to for assistance as he worked to bring the IVC program to northeastern Pennsylvania.

"It took us a while to figure out do we need it, how do we do it, and how do we get people involved," Grace added. "We found the easiest way to get people involved was to just tell them about it."

Recognizing that people can volunteer their time anywhere, they made a conscious effort to emphasize the spiritual component

of the program – because that is what makes it special.

"Our volunteers talk about taking what they learn in our monthly spiritual meetings and growing in their own spiritual life – and also taking that sense of service and caring for the person and underprivileged – and taking the message of Christ out into the world."

Denny, who has several years of training as a spiritual director, works to incorporate a lot of Ignatius' spirituality and exercises into the monthly meetings.

"It is an amazing honor. It has been an incredible gift to be able to 'travel' on people's personal journeys to God and see how they are doing it and growing in their relationship with God," he said.

"I am so impressed by the level of spiritual commitment and devotion of people," Grace added.

"We all help each other out. We learn from each other and have a lovely time with it."

In addition to McMahon and the Dawgerts, United Neighborhood Centers, NeighborWorks of Northeastern Pennsylvania and IVC members serving as CARE callers for the past four years will be recognized with the IVC Community Award.

Members of the community are invited to attend the Evening of Gratitude on March 14. Tickets can be purchased for \$50 and registration is available by calling Teddy Michel, IVC Regional Director, at (570) 941-4264, or visiting the IVC website at IVCUSA.org/NEPA.

If you would like more information on becoming an Ignatian Volunteer, you can also contact Michel at JMichel@ivcusa.org.



IGNATIAN VOLUNTEER CORPS EVENING OF GRATITUDE HONORING

PATRICK MCMAHON

THE MADONNA DELLA STRADA AWARD

GRACE & DENNY DAWGERT

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MISSION MESSAGE

An Outward Sign

**By Deacon Edward Kelly
Interim Director,
Pontifical Mission Societies**



which it is a part, especially with the poor and those who are far away. The Church is missionary by her very nature; she is not self-enclosed but sent out to every nation and people.”

Lent is a time to remember that “God so loved the world He gave His only Son so that we might have eternal life.” It can be a time to grow in God’s love by bringing the hope and mercy of Jesus Christ to a hurting world. Jesus, the hope that saves, and His mercy are at the heart of the Gospel. This, also, is the mandate of The Pontifical Mission Societies.

In the 1,150 mission dioceses around the world, we are blessed with missionaries who live out this mandate every day in the trenches doing good works by serving the physical and spiritual needs of the poor. I know this firsthand as I have been privileged to visit and walk in the shoes of those who live in mission dioceses.

If I have learned anything from my partners in the mission fields it is this: They teach us very clearly that to respond with hope and mercy is not simple but it is also not impossible. This Lent let us grow in God’s love by actually “being” the missionaries Jesus has called us to be by our Baptism. May the power of Christ’s love give all of us the strength and courage to serve those who suffer and are most vulnerable. In doing so, the ashes that we were blessed with on Ash Wednesday will truly be an outward sign that Christ is present in the world.


Yesterday was Ash Wednesday — the first day of Lent. As Lent is about to begin, I am carried back to my youth when I and my classmates of the now-closed Saint Thomas Aquinas Grade School in Archbald would process across the street to Saint Thomas Aquinas Church. There we would line up to receive ashes and wore them all day. I somehow knew that the ashes on my forehead were a sacred sign. Even as a kid, I knew there was something different and special about Ash Wednesday.

The Church would wisely urge us to rend our hearts, not our garments, to pray more, fast more, give more, which would help lead us closer to God and those around us. It was a day to really take a look at oneself. It was a day to answer the call to repentance and to be careful not to do good things in order to be seen by others as the Scripture texts for the day

urge. To use the words of William Shakespeare: “This above all, to thy own self be true.”

So many years later, I am still moved by the number of people who come to Church on Ash Wednesday to be marked with ashes on their foreheads in the sign of the cross. It is at that moment we come face to face with the reality that all of us come from God and one day we will return to God. Furthermore, this outward sign of the cross binds us to fellow Catholics all over the world. It reminds us that we are all missionaries called to live a life of love and service to others. It tells us that what we say and do matters and has power to do good on earth.

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, former National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies, once said, “God sees us two ways: the way we are and the way we were intended to be. And God is always calling us out of our ego so we can walk in the Divine.” Lent can be the starting point to look beyond ourselves and our safe community. Pope Francis affirms this: “Every Christian community is called to go out of itself and to be engaged in the life of the greater society of



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Papal Intention for February 2024

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From our Family to Yours -

Happy Valentine's Day!

Cathedral deacon participates in Vatican gathering of mental health ministers

VATICAN CITY - Deacon Ed Shoener of the Cathedral of Saint Peter was one of several Catholic mental health ministers from all over the world that gathered in the Dicastery for Communication earlier this week for the first-ever Vatican workshop dedicated to mental health and pastoral care.

Deacon Shoener helped to found the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers, which supports parishes and dioceses in starting mental health ministries.

According to Vatican News, Shoener joined others who are working on the frontlines of mental health ministry in Moldova, India, South Africa, among other places.



For more information on mental health ministry resources, visit catholicmhm.org.

The photo above is courtesy of Vatican Media.

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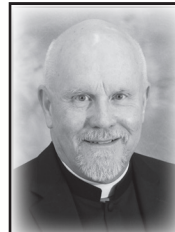
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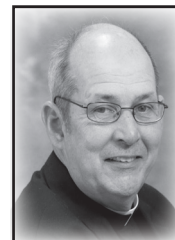
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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

"40 Days for Life" Pro-Life Rosary Gatherings — FEB. 15-MARCH 22, offered for the special intentions of an end to abortion and closure of the Planned Parenthood location in Wilkes-Barre; Rosary is prayed each weekday, Monday thru Friday, at 10 a.m. in front of the offices of Planned Parenthood, 101 North Main St., Wilkes-Barre. The pro-life campaign draws attention to the evil of abortion through prayer & fasting, constant vigil, and community outreach.

Annual Homemade Pierogi Sale — FEB. 15-MARCH 22, sponsored by St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 220 Church St., Moscow; sale held Monday thru Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the parish hall (lower level of St. Catherine Church) and after all weekend Masses. Cost: potato cheese or cabbage pierogi, \$10 for baker's dozen (13); halushki (cabbage & noodles) also available for \$8/quart. Orders may be placed by calling Mary Ann (570) 266-3198, or Betty Ann (570) 842-6195.

Lenten Fridays Buffet Dinner — FEB. 16, MARCH 1 & 15, hosted by St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Pocono Pines; dinners will be served on three Fridays in Lent from 4 to 6 p.m. in the social hall of Our Lady of the Lake Church, 5112 Pocono Crest Road, Pocono Pines (near the intersection of Routes 940 & 423). Menu offerings include garden salad, choice of two soups, and meatless entrees featuring fish, stuffed pasta shells, macaroni & cheese, halushki, baked ziti, veggie

Continued on page 29

Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement.

It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the *Code of Canon Law* and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Beth Pacuska at (570) 862-7551.

Aviso al Respeto de Reportar el Abuso Sexual de Un Menor de Edad

Es la norma de la Diócesis de Scranton reportar cualquier alegación de abuso sexual de un menor de edad a las autoridades. Si usted es una víctima de abuso sexual cometido por un sacerdote, diácono, religioso o empleado laico, o voluntario de la Diócesis de Scranton, usted está obligado a reportar el asunto inmediatamente a las autoridades de la ley.

Si algún sacerdote, diácono, religioso, empleado laico o voluntario de la Diócesis de Scranton tiene sospecha de que un menor de edad ha sido sujeto a cualquier forma de abuso, incluyendo abuso sexual de menor de edad, el asunto será reportado a las autoridades de la ley.

Es la norma de la Diócesis defender todas las regulaciones civiles y del estado. Al fin de que la Diócesis esté comprometida igualmente a defender las normas del Código de Derecho Canónico y defender los principios de la Carta Para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes (Conferencia de los Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos), lo cual incluye apoyar a las víctimas de abuso sexual en pos del bienestar emocional y espiritual.

Por eso, información respecto a una alegación del asunto sexual de un menor de edad, debe ser reportada a la Coordinadora Diocesana de Asistencia para Las Víctimas, Mary Beth Pacuska, a (570) 862-7551.

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Bishop of Sunyani, Ghana, stops in Scranton for pastoral visit

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton was honored and privileged to welcome the Most Rev. Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi, Bishop of Sunyani, Ghana, to northeastern Pennsylvania on Jan. 30, 2024, for a brief pastoral visit.

Bishop Matthew celebrated the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton and visited several parishes where eight priests from the Diocese of Sunyani are currently ministering locally.

“On behalf of the Diocese of Sunyani, the priests, religious and lay faithful, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Bishop Joseph (Bamberra) and the entire diocese for receiving our priests into your diocese and being kind and making life possible for them here in the United States,” Bishop Matthew said.

Father Gerald W. Shantillo, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, welcomed Bishop Matthew to the Cathedral at the start of the Mass on behalf of Bishop Bamberra.

“It is so good to have Bishop Matthew with us today. He is the Bishop of a younger diocese, only 50 years old, but it is alive and vibrant with the faith,” Father Shantillo stated.

Two years ago, Father Shantillo accompanied Bishop



On Jan. 30, 2024, the Most Rev. Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi, Bishop of Sunyani, Ghana, stopped in Scranton for a pastoral visit. Bishop Matthew celebrated the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. Pictured, from left: Father Gerald W. Shantillo, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia; Bishop Matthew Gyamfi; Father Stephen Bosomafi, Pastor, Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel; and Father Jeffrey Tudgay, Pastor, Cathedral of Saint Peter and Immaculate Conception Parishes, Scranton. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

Bamberra for a pastoral visit to the Diocese of Sunyani and was struck by the faith of the African people. He explained the important role each Ghanaian priest is having in our community.

“I can tell you, the people of Scranton, no matter where I go, tell me they are grateful for your priests who are here ministering to them and they love them just like one of our own priests from this diocese,” Father Shantillo added.

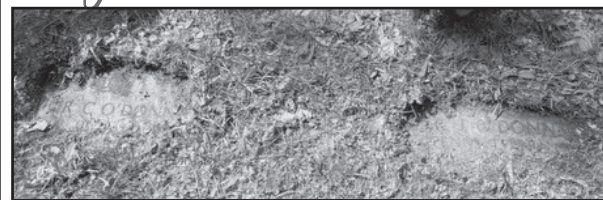
After preaching a homily on forgiveness – in which he told

the crowd forgiving those who have offended us is one of the important teachings of Christ – Bishop Matthew ended the Mass by showcasing his visit highlights the universality of the Catholic Church.

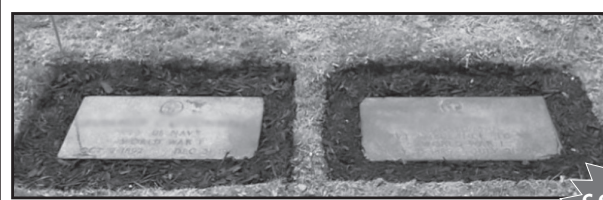
“We thank you for the contributions, help, and assistance that this diocese has given to my

diocese. We are grateful to you,” brother Bishop, speaking, and Bishop Matthew said. “It is where we see the Church as one universal Catholic Church, otherwise, how else could I have come to be here, sitting in the chair of my brother Bishop, speaking, and proclaiming the Word of God and praying with you.” To view the Mass celebrated by Bishop Matthew, visit the Diocese of Scranton’s YouTube channel.

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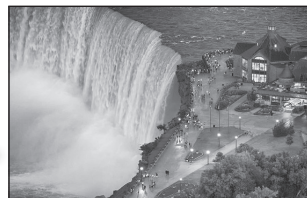


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Men's priest discernment retreat March 1 & 2



SCRANTON — The Diocese of Scranton Vocations Office is hosting “Ezra 10:4 — A Retreat for Men Discerning the Priesthood” for college-age men and older on March 1 & 2.

The priest discernment retreat will be hosted at Holy Family Spiritual Renewal Center, 151 Old Newport St., Nanticoke, beginning with arrival on Friday, March 1, from 6 to 7 p.m.

The retreat will conclude

following the weekend Vigil Mass on Saturday, March 2.

Led by Father Alex Roche, diocesan director of vocations, the preached retreat will include talks, discussion, Eucharistic liturgy and adoration, Sacrament of Reconciliation, and time to connect with other men discerning God's call in their lives.

The retreat is offered free of charge. For registration, visit:

dioceseofscranton.org/vocations.

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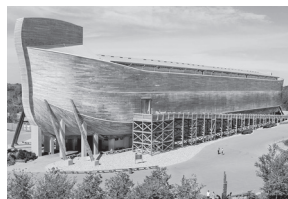
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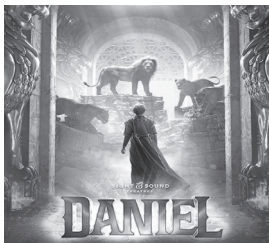
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Drums parish hosting annual Lenten Scripture series

DRUMS — Father Connell McHugh, pastor emeritus of Good Shepherd Parish in Drums, will present his annual Scripture study series at the parish during the Season of Lent over the course of five consecutive Wednesdays, beginning on Feb. 21.

The weekly Lenten presentations examining a specific text of the Bible will be offered each Wednesday morning at 9 a.m. in the church hall.

The "Gospel of Mark" is the

topic for this Lent's Scripture series, during which Father McHugh will provide an in-depth discussion of Saint Mark's life and the sources and history of his Gospel, including major themes and the author's telling of Jesus' healing ministry and Messianic mission.

Father McHugh will also focus on Mark's emphasis — more than any other Gospel — on the humanity of Jesus and how the Saint's writings became the chief

source for the Gospels and Matthew and Luke. A special session during the five-week presentation will be dedicated to the powerful Passion Narrative contained in the Gospel of Mark.

All sessions are open to the public free of charge; registration is required, as study notes will be provided for those attending and space is limited.

To register, contact the Good Shepherd Parish office at (570) 788-3141.

Oblate Fathers plan annual Saint Joseph Novena, Feast day celebration

LAFLIN — Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, rector of the Oblates of Saint Joseph religious community, Route 315, Laflin, announces the upcoming annual nine-day Novena and feast day celebration of Saint Joseph, beginning on Sunday, March 10, in the Oblates chapel.

Novena Masses will be celebrated each day at noon and 7 p.m., with the noon liturgies broadcast live on JMJ Catholic

Radio 104.5 FM.

This year's Novena preacher will be Saint Joseph Oblate Father Brian Crawford, who resides in Menlo Park, Calif., and serves as the OSJ province vocation director.



Father Brian Crawford, OSJ

Following all Masses, Novena devotions to Saint Joseph will be prayed, followed by the individual blessing with the relic of Saint Joseph Marello, founder

of the Saint Joseph Oblates congregation.

On the Feast of Saint Joseph, Tuesday, March 19, Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the 7 p.m. Mass, concelebrated by the Oblate Fathers and Diocesan clergy.

Earlier Masses on the feast day will be offered at 8 a.m. and noon. All faithful of the Scranton Diocese are invited to participate in the Novena and the feast honoring Saint Joseph as spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Patron of the Universal Church.



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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese of Scranton

Continued from page 24

penne, pierogi casserole, spinach lasagna, Mexican casserole, penne w/ vodka sauce, and steamed & roasted vegetables. Buffet also includes rolls, hot & cold beverages, and dessert table. Cost: \$12 per person; both dine-in and take-out service available. For more information, call the parish office at (570) 646-6424.

Lenten Fridays Food Fundraiser — FEB. 16-MARCH 22, sponsored by SS. Cyril & Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church in Olyphant; pre-orders required by 6 p.m. on Monday of each week. Pick-up for advance orders

held each Lenten Friday between 2 and 6 p.m. Menu items: homemade halushki (cabbage & noodles), pagach, and pierogi (potato, cabbage and sauerkraut & cheese); two meatless soups featured each week, along with rice pudding and pizza. Every Wednesday and Friday during Lent, Lou's Concessions available from 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; featuring potato pancakes, deep fried pierogi, lobster bisque, fries, macaroni & cheese, and other specials. To place orders, call Jule (570) 357-6171, or Michaelene (570) 209-2026.

Lenten Fridays Potato Pancake Sale — FEB. 16-MARCH 22, sponsored by St. Maria Goretti Parish,

42 Redwood Drive, Laflin; sale of potato pancakes is take-out only on the Fridays of Lent, from 3 to 6 p.m. Cost: three for \$5; six for \$10; and 12 for \$20. For more information, call (570) 407-0006.

Lenten Fridays Pierogi Sale — FEB. 16-MARCH 22, sponsored by Nativity of the BVM Parish in Tunkhannock; sale of packaged homemade pierogi held each Friday during Lent from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cost: \$8 per dozen. Halushki and clam chowder will also be sold on Friday, Feb. 16.

Monthly Meeting of the Lay Carmelites — FEB. 17, hosted by Our Lady of the Mountains Lay Carmelite Community on the third Saturday of each month; gatherings are held from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Oblates of St. Joseph seminary/chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin. For more information, contact Chris at (570) 239-8094.

Christian Women Meeting — FEB. 18, hosted at the Monsignor Fleming Center, 720 West Fourth St.,

Williamsport; gathering begins at 3 p.m. Guest speaker: Father Edward Michelini, pastor emeritus, who previously served as administrator of Mater Dolorosa Parish, Williamsport; his topic will focus on the needs of

the Catholic church in Alaska, having spent seven months in the Diocese of Fairbanks following his retirement from pastoral ministry in 2022. All men and women are welcome to attend.

Continued on page 30



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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Continued from page 29

Sunday Pierogi & Soup Sale — FEB. 18, sponsored by SS. Peter & Paul Church, 1309 West Locus St., West Scranton; packages of homemade pierogi sold every weekend after the church's 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday. Cost: \$10 per dozen. Soups sold following the Sunday Mass include: shellfish bisque (\$15/quart); beef vegetable, Italian Wedding, pea soup, pasta fagioli & clam chowder (all \$8/quart.)

Adult Faith Formation: "Symbolon Series — Living Out Faith in the Modern World" — FEB. 20 & 27, MARCH 5, 12 & 19, hosted

by St. Boniface Parish in Williamsport and St. Lawrence Parish in South Williamsport; Tuesday sessions held from 2 to 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence Parish Hall, 880 West Central Ave. All are welcome.

Eucharistic Holy Hour — FEB. 21, hosted by St. John Vianney Parish in Scott Township; Eucharistic exposition & adoration begins at 7 p.m. at the parish's Corpus Christi Church, 704 Montdale Road, Scott Township. All faithful are welcome to spend time in prayerful meditation before the Blessed Sacrament.

Night at the Races — FEB. 24, sponsored by St. Mary's of Dorrance (Wyalusing) Church; doors open at 6 p.m., with post time at 7 p.m. For more information/reservations and to purchase a horse, call (570) 868-5855.

Annual Night at the Races — FEB. 24, sponsored by St. Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg; held in the parish hall on Ridgeway Street. Doors open at 5 p.m.; post time (12 races) is 6:15 p.m. Admission fee: \$10 (adults only; 21 and older), includes buffet/dessert and cash bar; race horses cost \$20 each. Table reservations of six or more are recommended.

Lenten Taizé Prayer — FEB. 25, hosted by St. John the Evangelist Parish in Pittston; service begins at 3 p.m. in St. John Church, 35 William St., Pittston. Meditative Lenten Taizé features performance by members of Cantores Christi Regis of King's College, Wilkes-Barre, directed by Robert Yenkowski, who will lead sung prayer by candlelight. All are welcome.

Lenten Healing Mass — FEB. 29, hosted by St. Joseph Marelo Parish at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 237 William St., Pittston; Healing Mass begins at 11:30 a.m., during which the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick will be administered. All are welcome.

Lenten Table "Rice Bowl" Soup Dinner — MARCH 1, hosted at St. Lawrence Parish Hall, 800 West Central Ave., South Williamsport; held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Those attending are requested to provide their own soup bowl and spoon. All are welcome.

Meditative Music Series — MARCH 1, 8 & 15, hosted by St. John the Evangelist Parish in Pittston; held on three consecutive Fridays in Lent, beginning at 4:45 p.m. in St. John

Church, 35 William St. Series features area musicians performing Lenten seasonal music; includes guitarist Ed Sankus (March 1), violinist Lynn Hurst, accompanied on piano by parish music director Michael Sowa (March 8), and organ music by Michael Sowa (March 15). All Friday programs will be followed by Stations of the Cross at 5:30 p.m. in the church.

Lenten Fridays Food Sale — MARCH 1-29, hosted by St. John the Evangelist Parish, 35 William St., Pittston; held every Friday in March (including Good Friday) with order pick-up from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the Monsignor Bendik Pastoral Center on Church Street. Sale items include potato pancakes (3 for \$5) and take-and-heat halushki (\$7/quart). March 22 & 29 only, nut and lekvar (prune) rolls from Kieran's Bakehouse, Plains, will be sold (\$7/half and \$14/whole). Orders required by Thursday of each week by calling the parish office (570) 654-0053.

Monthly "XLT: Exalt" Young Adults Gathering — MARCH 7, sponsored by the Scranton Diocesan Office of Vocations; hosted at St. Maria Goretti Church, 42 Redwood Drive, Laflin, beginning at 7 p.m. Gathering held on the first Thursday of each month; includes Eucharistic Adoration, guest speaker, music, Sacrament of Reconciliation and social. For more information, contact Kyra Krzywicki, vocation program coordinator, at: kkrzywicki@dioceseofscranton.org.

Parish Fish Dinner — MARCH 8, sponsored by Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Montoursville; dinner served from 4:30 to 7 p.m. in the church hall. Menu includes baked fish, macaroni & cheese, cole slaw, stewed tomatoes, roll and dessert. Take-out meals available; dining area will be open for sit-down option. Cost: adults, \$14; children, \$6. Tickets available at the parish office.

St. Patrick's Day Dinner — MARCH 16, hosted by St. Lawrence Parish in South Williamsport; held from 4 to 7 p.m. in the parish hall, 800 West Central Ave. Dinner features corned beef, ham & cabbage, potatoes, carrots, Irish soda bread, desserts and refreshments; patrons may provide their own beverages. Cost: adults, \$15; children (ages 12 & under), \$5. Tickets available at the door.

Who makes house calls?

As of October 2015, I will now meet clients either at their home, or at a location they choose and no longer require clients to meet at my office. I have decided that I would change the way I meet with people so it will be as easy and as convenient as possible for the client.

Based on my practice, which consists of estate planning and administration along with elder law, I find that clients are more comfortable discussing such matters in familiar surroundings. While I know this may seem unconventional to some, I believe I will be able to serve clients much better in this fashion.

If anyone is uncomfortable with home visits, I have a few locations where I can meet in an office setting. I look forward to meeting with my existing clients and especially meeting new clients that are looking for any assistance in estate or elder law matters.



Elder Law

- Guardianships
- Asset Protection Planning
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Estate Administration

Probate :
Settle all estate matters and distribute inheritances.

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Utilize all discounts and proper deductions.
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- Powers of Attorney • Living Wills • Wills
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Slovak Lenten program March 17 in Kingston

KINGSTON — The Slovak North Maple Ave., Kingston. Heritage Society of NEPA will Congregational singing of host the celebration of a Lenten Slovak Lenten hymns will open Slovak Hymn Sing & Traditional the program at 2 p.m., followed Slovak Stations of the Cross by prayerful mediation of the on Sunday, March 17, at Saint Ignatius Loyola Church, 339 the sorrowful Stations of the Cross in the Slovak language.

IN MEMORIAM

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Catherine Ann Gilvary

Entered Life:
July 17, 1936

Entered Eternal Life:
January 16, 2024



Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Marianne Knight

Entered Life:
December 31, 1938

Entered Eternal Life:
February 2, 2024

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Joan Katoski

Entered Life:
December 17, 1940

Entered Eternal Life:
February 5, 2024



Sister of Christian Charity Theresa Di Nunzio

Entered Life:
December 8, 1928

Entered Eternal Life:
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Scranton Diocese generously responds to help Detective Gilmartin

Continued from page 7

Eileen Rishcoff, principal of Wyoming Area Catholic School whose son, Tim, graduated high school with Gilmartin, along with Father Michael Drevitch, assistant pastor at the nearby parish of Corpus Christi in West Pittston, related how she reached out to the school community to show their support.

"When the donations started rolling in, we were overwhelmed with the amazing response of love and willingness to help that our school family offered," she said. "We were able to donate \$1,000 to officer Kyle Gilmartin and his family. We weren't looking for any recognition, but simply teaching our students to always do the right thing!"

Faithful who attended Masses at the Cathedral of Saint Peter during the Jan. 13-14 weekend contributed \$2,368 to a special collection that directly aided Detective Gilmartin and his family.

"We remain humbled by the generosity of our Cathedral family, especially in responding to the needs of a local hero and his family in a time of exceptional need," Father Jeff Tudgay, Cathedral pastor, said. "Detective Gilmartin and his family continue to be in our prayers and his swift recovery entrusted to God."

The weekend of Jan. 20-21 saw parishioners from Gate of Heaven Church, Dallas, and Our Lady of Victory Church, Harveys Lake, give

\$1,198 and \$1,227, respectively, to special Mass collections resulting in checks (totaling nearly \$2,500) Father Andrew Hvozdovic, the parishes' pastor, personally presented to the Scranton Police Department.

"Once I learned of the unfortunate situation of Detective Gilmartin, I felt obligated to have my parishes do something to help," Father Hvozdovic expressed. "My own father was a Wilkes-Barre city firefighter for 30 years and my nephew is currently serving in the United States Marine Corps, so I have first-hand experience of what it means to have a first responder in the family. Our prayers continue to be with the Gilmartin family."

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